IS Volume5

source : https://www.baka-tsuki.org/project/index.php?title=IS:Volume5

These are the novel illustrations that were included in volume 5

Okiura

【著者】

弓弦イズル
ゆみづる・いずる

あーあー。弓弦です。あーあー（扇風機に向かって）。
なんか最近は暑かったり寒かったりひどいですね。
私は温度変化に弱いのでとても困ります。
寝込んだりします。変温動物ばりに弱いです。
というわけで誰か保護してください。

え、あ、仕事ですか？　あの、休みは……
…。……。…。
しばらくは無いようです。ぐあー。

【イラストレーター】

okiura
おきうら

新進気鋭のイラストレーター。普段は擬人化メカ少女や魔法少女ものを好んでよく描く。
『白銀のローレシアン』(一迅社文庫)の挿絵を担当。また、マクロスA(エース)にて「マクロスF　～しーくれっとびじょんず～」を連載中。

カバーイラスト／okiura　装丁／ヒーローズ

MF文庫 J
ゆ-01-05

IS〈インフィニット・ストラトス〉⑤
弓弦イズル

580

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メディアファクトリー

IS〈インフィニット・ストラトス〉⑤

ＩＳ学園二学期、その一番最初の行事として催される学園祭では、
なぜか一夏の所属部活動を巡っての競争に。
そんな中、今までなりを潜めていた『最強』の生徒会長こと更識楯無（さらしきたてなし）の登場に波乱の予感が渦巻く！
さらには不審な組織までもが動き出し……！？
「ものがたり」のはじまり、ハイスピード学園バトルラブコメ第五弾、開幕！

MF文庫 J 弓弦イズルの本

- IS〈インフィニット・ストラトス〉［イラスト：okiura］
- IS〈インフィニット・ストラトス〉②［イラスト：okiura］
- IS〈インフィニット・ストラトス〉③［イラスト：okiura］
- IS〈インフィニット・ストラトス〉④［イラスト：okiura］
- IS〈インフィニット・ストラトス〉⑤［イラスト：okiura］

Infinite Stratos 5

Izuru Yumizuru

「いらっしゃいませ！
ご奉仕喫茶にようこそ♪」

「ところで知ってる？
この学園の生徒会長というのは、
最強の称号だということを」

ジンデルラ、
そうり膜!!
ンデルラ!

キャラクター紹介

織斑一夏（おりむらいちか）

「世界で唯一ISを動かせる男子」。
専用IS【白式】。

篠ノ之箒（しののののほうき）

一夏の幼なじみ。
専用IS【紅椿】。

セシリア・オルコット

イギリス代表候補生。
専用IS【ブルー・ティアーズ】。

凰鈴音（ファン・リンイン）

中国代表候補生。
専用IS【甲龍】。

シャルロット・デュノア

フランス代表候補生。
専用IS【R-リヴァイヴ・カスタムII】。

ラウラ・ボーデヴィッヒ

ドイツ代表候補生。
専用IS【シュヴァルツェア・レーゲン】。

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雨

CHOCO

インフィニット・ストラトス

INFINITE STRATOS

5

弓弦イズル
YUMIZURU Izuru

Illustration: CHOCO

OVERLAP

IS 5

INFINITE STRATOS

インフィニット・ストラトス 5

弓弦イズル
YUMIZURU Izuru

Illustration: CHOCO

「幾多の舞踏会をくぐり抜け、群(むら)がる敵兵をなぎ倒し、
灰儘(かいじん)を纏(まと)うことさえいとわぬ地上最強の兵士たち。
彼女らを呼ぶにふさわしい称号……
それが『灰被り姫(シンデレラ)』!」
IS
Infinite Stratos 5: Visualization of Stories

「ところで知ってる？
この学園の生徒会長というのは、
最強の称号だということを」

近接格闘戦に特化させた結果、人型では無く八つの
装甲脚を持った蜘蛛型のレイアウトの大型IS。
亡国機業がアメリカから奪ったISに各種武装を後付で装備させている。
巨大な副腕の他、操縦者の腕も独立して自由に使える為、
相手との密着状態でも有利な戦闘を行える。
各装甲脚は格闘用ブレード、実弾発射口、PIC展開機構を装備。
粘着性エネルギーネットで相手を拘束し、複雑でしなやかな
多数の脚で相手の手数を上回る攻撃をしかける。

和名：王蜘蛛
型式：AT-004
世代：第二世代
国家：アメリカ

分類：近接格闘型
装備：装甲脚固定砲『ルーフワーブ』
　　マシンガン『ノーリンコカービン』
　　カタール『ルームシャトル』x2
装甲：超甲質繊維装甲
仕様：粘着性エネルギーネット

ロシア製第三世代IS「モスクワの深い霧」を橋無仕様にカスタムしたもの。最大の特徴は
アクア・ナノマシンの混入した水を自由に制御する、攻守一体となった戦闘スタイル。
四連装のガトリング・ガンを内蔵したランスは超高周波振動の水を螺旋状に纏って攻撃用
ブレードを成形する。一見アーマーの面積は狭く小さいが、各部に装着された球体の
ウォーターサーバから放出された水が、黒いリボン状のクリノリンフレームで制御され、
美しい透明のドレスのような液状防御フィールドを成形する。三個一組で左右に浮いている
クリスタル状のビットからは水のヴェールが展開され、マント様に操縦者を包み込む。

和名：霧纏の淑女
型式：rmf-c_01
世代：第三世代
国家：ロシア

分類：中距離汎用型
装備：四連装ガトリング・ガン内蔵ランス『蒼流旋』
　　蛇腹剣『ラスティー・ネイル』
装甲：レーザー構築型クリスティル結晶装甲
仕様：起爆性ナノマシン

Dan GOTANDA Right

Left Ran GOTANDA

織斑一夏 おりむら・いちか

Ichika ORIMURA

世界で唯一ISを動かせる男子。
専用IS【白式】

篠ノ之箒 しののの・ほうき

Houki SHINONONO

一夏の幼なじみ。
専用IS【紅椿】

セシリア・オルコット

Cecilia ALCOTT

イギリス代表候補生
専用IS【ブルー・ティアーズ】

凰鈴音 ファン・リンイン

Lingyin HUANG

中国代表候補生
専用IS【甲龍】

シャルロット・デュノア
Charlotte DUNOIS

フランス代表候補生
専用IS【ラファール・リヴァイヴ・カスタムII】

ラウラ・ボーデヴィッヒ
Laura BODEWIG

ドイツ代表候補生
専用IS【シュヴァルツェア・レーゲン】

更識楯無 さらしき・たてなし
Tatenashi SARASHIKI

IS学園生徒会長
専用IS【ミステリアス・レイディ】

5 第一話 恋スル☆舌下錠（ハート・ペインキラー）

65 第二話 生徒会長は猫座の女

110 第三話 硝子少女の透色和音（シンデレラ・ヒール すきいろわおん）

188 第四話 ミステリアス・レイディ

217 エピローグ 『ものがたり』のはじまり

1-1
セシリア
1-1
はるき

件名	日付
【祝】第5巻発売！	：2013/ 梅雨前線停滞中
□ラフ □クリンナップ ■あとがき	時刻 ：俺の右手が真っ赤にｲｪｰｶﾞｰ！

CHOCO
MUGITANI KOICHI
http://chocolateshop-float.com

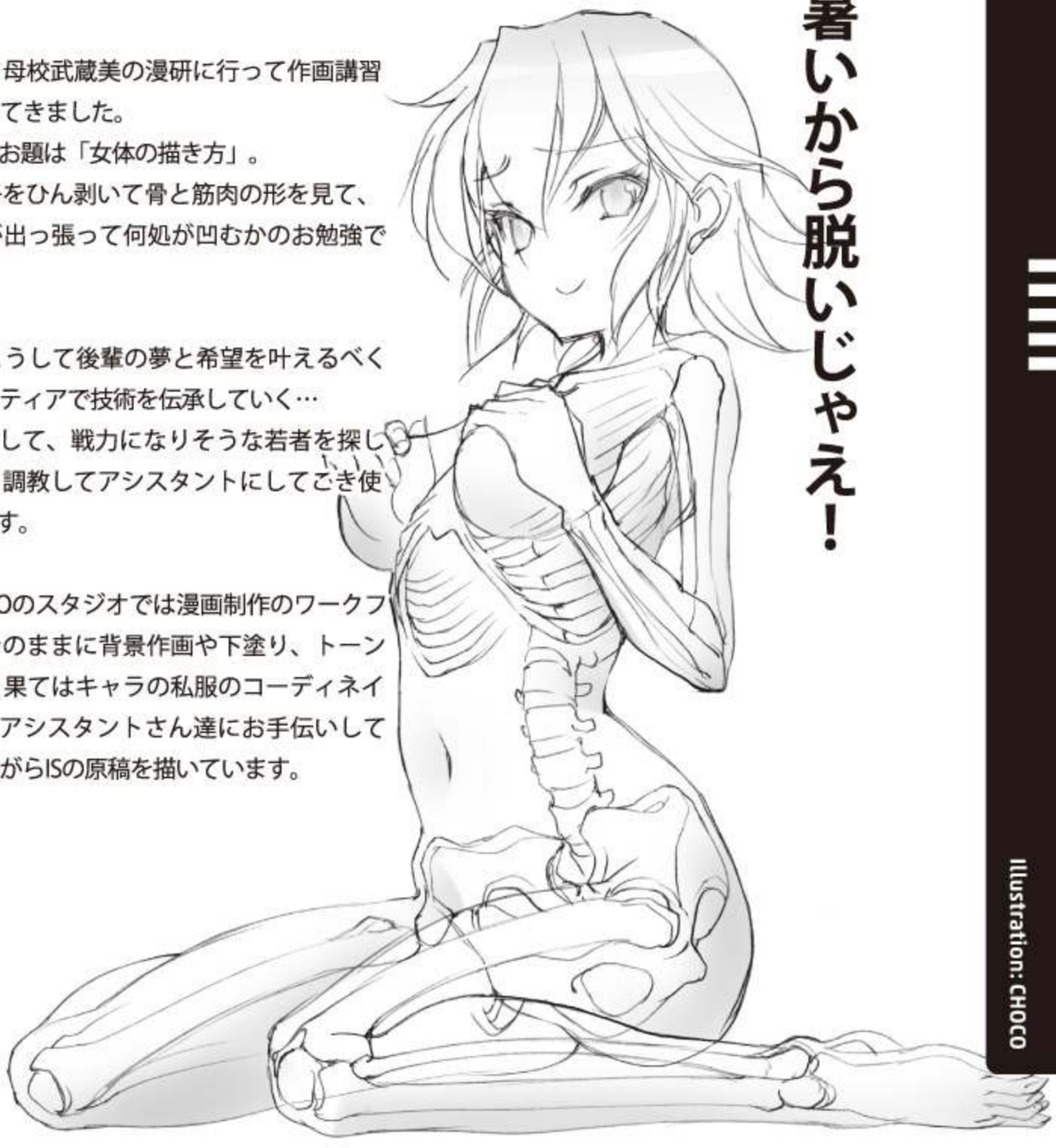
蒸し暑いから脱いじゃえ！

初登場の楯無さん、作中でも脱ぎまくっていましたが、更に脱いで無修正サービスです。

先日、母校武蔵美の漫研に行って作画講習会をしてきました。
今回のお題は「女体の描き方」。
女の子をひん剥いて骨と筋肉の形を見て、何処が出っ張って何処が凹むかのお勉強です。

時々こうして後輩の夢と希望を叶えるべくボランティアで技術を伝承していく…
フリをして、戦力になりそうな若者を探し出し、調教してアシスタントにしてこき使うのです。

CHOCOのスタジオでは漫画制作のワークフローそのままに背景作画や下塗り、トーン貼り、果てはキャラの私服のコーディネイト等をアシスタントさん達にお手伝いして貰いながらISの原稿を描いています。



Chapter 1: Heart's Painkiller

"DEYYAAAHHHH!!!"

KLANG! The heavy sound of metal echoed out. Ichika and Rin clashed blades as they faced off against each other.

It was the 3rd of September, during a practical training lesson at the beginning of the second term that was held between classes 1 and 2.

"Ku...!"

"I WON'T LET YOU GET AWAY, ICHIKA!"

As fellow class representatives, both of them were fighting in this match. Ichika had the upper hand at the beginning, but Rin started to turn it around.

The reason was simple and clear. [Byakushiki]'s second phase was using energy too quickly.

"You used too much energy on your shield!"

"Not over yet!"

Ichika swung his blade, but the [Yukihira Niigata] had already lost the glow of the [Reiraku Byakuya] and became an ordinary physical sword.

If he pulled his distance, Ichika should be able to fire the particle cannon from the multi-purpose left arm weapon [Setsura], but that part had also lost all energy.

"It's useless! This [Shenlong] is designed to be stable and be efficient in using up the energy—[Impact Cannons]!"

BOOM! After firing several high-pressure shots in quick succession, Ichika and Rin pulled away from each other.

It seemed that Rin didn't intend on letting go of this opportunity as she threw out the attached [Souten Gagetsu].

"Kuu!"

Ichika managed to take the powerful hit, but Rin already disappeared from his eyes.

Though the IS Hyper Sensors managed to make up for it as it sensed the enemy's location, it was already too late .

"TTTAAAAAAAAA!!!"

Rin grabbed Ichika on the foot and threw him forcefully to the ground.

As the sunlight was too strong, Ichika immediately narrowed his eyes, and he saw a black figure flying down at him.

"I WIN!"

"!"

Rin remained upside down and continued shooting the [Impact Cannons] at him.

After shooting 10 rounds, the bell rang, indicating that the match was over.

--Needless to say, Ichika lost.

"It's now two straight wins for me. Heh heh, treat me now."

"Ku..."

I lost both the first part and the second part of the practical training. After clearing up everything, our usual gang arrived at the student cafeteria.

Having been messed around by her, I felt the agony of defeat as I ate lunch.

On a side note, I chose the miso mackerel set. The white miso is really tasty, and the mackerel's chewiness' really outstanding. Yup, the aunties in the IS Academy Cafeteria did this really well.

"Is that nice, Laura?"

"Yeah. I never thought that I could eat Schnitzel outside my own country."

Laura, who's good friends with Charl, sliced the German cuisine dish Schnitzel[5A 1] (fried beef steak).

"Do you want some?"

"Wah? Can I?"

"Yup."

"I'll take this then! Ehehe, I always wanted to eat this."

Charl ate the Schnitzel Laura sliced for her, looking really delighted.

"Mn~! This is so delicious! Every single German meat dish is nice."

"Well, you can put it that way. The potato dishes are also worth trying."

Laura blushed slightly, probably happy that her own country got praised.

On seeing them like this, the other girls seemed like they also wanted to join in the conversation as everyone started to talk about cuisines.

"Ah—Germany produces a lot of nice sweets like the Baumkuchen[5A 2]. China doesn't have those kinds of desserts, so I'm a bit jealous."

"I see. I'll tell my squad next time to send the Frankfurter Kranz[5A 3] over."

Huh, let me try and recall. A Frankfurter Kranz should be a buttercream cake that's covered in caramel. It's shaped uniquely like a king's crown.

But the Baumkuchen should be like that as well. Do German dessert chefs insist on a hole in the middle?

"Speaking of German dessert, I love that thing, that Berliner Pfannkuchen[5A 4]."

Cecilia said that, but Charl asked back in shock,

"Huh? The Berliner Pfannkuchen's that deep-fried bread that has jam inside right? The exterior's made of vanilla though, so I feel there should be a lot of calories... do you like that kind of thing, Cecilia?"

"I-I calculated the calories carefully before, so there's no problem! That's right, I prepare to fast for the rest of the day when I eat a Berliner Pfannkuchen..."

Do you need to prepare yourself and follow the bushido code of fasting in the first place?

If you want to eat dessert, just eat it. I'll get scolded if I say that, right?

"A deep-fried bread with jam inside. Sounds good."

As expected of Houki. A primary school girl normally wouldn't eat too many deep-fried breads with the nutritional lunch, but she would finish hers completely... Houki seems like she'll get angry if I say that, so I decided to remain silent.

"If you like deep-fried bread, Cecilia, how about I make you some sesame balls next time?"

"What's that?"

"A Chinese dessert. It's sweetened bean paste with glutinous flour wrapped around it. The exterior's coated with a layer of sesame and then deep fried~"

"It-It sounds delicious! Ah, but the calories..."

"No problem. Just tell me when you want to eat it."

"Rin-san...you're a better person than I thought you were..."

"WHAT DO YOU MEAN *YOU THOUGHT*!? SAYING WHAT 'BETTER THAN I THOUGHT YOU WERE'!"

Over here, Rin and Cecilia still have quite the good relationship.

"I like Japanese desserts. That can be called classy, right?"

At one time during summer vacation, everyone went to a green tea cafe, and Laura seemed like she liked the fruit-jelly desserts, it also seemed like she often went there after that.

After she told that to her friends in her native country, they were envious. Furthermore, it seems like they also wanted some Yatsuhashi[5A 5] sent over or something. I do feel that her military friends are really direct.

"If you eat sugar snacks during spring and jelly during summer, you have to eat sweetened bean paste pastries in the autumn."

"Oh, and winter?"

"Crackers."

As expected of Houki, she really understands a Japanese's heart.

But if we continue to discuss about sweets, I'll really feel like I want to eat them.

(But I have no time to chit-chat about this.)

Right now, I should be thinking about IS, the problem with my IS, [Byakushiki].

"Sigh...speaking of which, why did I lose even with the power up..."

"I told you your machine used up energy too quickly. Your weapon would already lower your shield energy, so it'll get worse with two of them."[5A 6]

"Mn..."

It'll still be okay if that's the case, but even the wing-shaped boosters on the back got enlarged, so a lot of energy is spent.

Though I need two-thirds of my time to recharge the [Ignition Boost] to increase my speed to 1.5 times, it really is too much to use up that amount of energy...

But course, all these won't use up too much shield energy, but because the particle cannon uses the same energy system, I have to use it well.

(Need to quickly switch between close range and long range tactics, also need to get shooting practice, training with the new equipment and...)

ARRGGHH! I HAVE LOTS OF THINGS TO DO!

Even so, my top priority's the same as when I was in first phase. It's about how to conserve my energy.

(Energy, energy. Can't I use a little less energy somewhere? Sigh...)

"I-I don't think that's a problem! Just partner with me!"

Houki folded her arms in front of her chest as she said that.

Houki's personal IS [Akatsubaki]'s unique one-off ability [Kenran Butou] is the complete opposite of [Reiraku Byakuya]. In other words, it increases the amount of energy, and can also transfer energy with a single touch. That's normally hard to do between ISs.

(Speaking of which, Chifuyu-nee did seem to say it before that [Byakushiki] and [Akatsubaki] were a pair. The initial design was for both machines to use each other's energy.)

--Most likely, it also has the significance of controlling each other.

[Byakushiki] can destroy energy, and the [Akatsubaki] can increase it.

So these two machines are the [keys to stop each other].

(...)

"Why are you looking so awkward? You're my bride, so team up with me."

Laura was poking at my right cheek.

Recently, Laura's been a lot gentler, and would even joke around. However, it's hard to tell because she always looks so cold.

"Unfortunately, Ichika's teaming up with me! I'm his childhood friend, and [Shenlong] can fight in close range or mid-range, so it matches with [Byakushiki] well."

"Wha, why are you deciding this on your own...!? Ahem! If that's the case, this Cecilia Alcott-sama will take part as the representative candidate with a long-range type machine. I can cover the ranges [Byakushiki] has a problem with."

"No, I'm first in line if we're talking about childhood friends. And also, well, how should I put it...[Byakushiki] and [Akatsubaki] look just like a picture when together. It-It matches..."

She sounded really vague at the last moment, and I couldn't hear it clearly. Anyway, with Houki leading the charge, everyone was willing to be my teammate. Why did this happen?

"Mn...but there aren't any group tournaments to take part in recently."

"Maybe there will be one out of a sudden."

"At that time—I think I'll go with Charl."

"Huh? Me?"

Maybe she was shocked that she got named, as Charl's hand that was holding the fork full of Carbonara[5A 7] suddenly stopped.

Then, she put down her fork and spoon, rubbed her hands together, and asked,

"Wh-Why-Why's that so?"

"We teamed up before."

"Oh, I see..."

The eyes that were glittering one second ago suddenly became dark like obsidian, as Charl continued to eat with an empty look.

...Wha-What just happened.

"I knew that would happen. Haa..."

Charl's sigh felt like a fuse as the other girls started scolding me.

"You're really too much..."

"Really, don't you know what a girl's heart is?"

"Ichika-san's blockheadness can't be forgiven at times."

"I'll treat you to Cafe ja, Charlotte. Don't feel so downheartened."

"Tha-Thanks, Laura...and everyone."

Charl seemed to be really touched as her eyes brightened. She smiled at everyone...except for me.

"I-I didn't say that for you."

After saying that, Rin folded her arms in front of her chest. However, she blushed, seemingly shy.

"Heh...Rin, you're rather gentle even though you say that."

"Hu-Humph!"

(Ohh, as expected of Charl, always friendly to everyone regardless of gender. Her friendly personality's rather good.)

"...Why are you looking at me."

"No, you're thinking too much, Houki?"

"...Why are you looking at me now?"

"You're thinking too much, Laura."

After saying that, both of them gave me a karate chop each.

The karate chops have the hidden meaning of 'You must be thinking of something rude'.

(The-There's no such thing, right?)

The karate chops landed again.

"Uu."

""Humph!""

After finishing my lunch with a lot of commotion, we headed to the arena for afternoon practice.

"It's such a waste to have so much space..."

The changing room that became my personal one made me really insecure.

After putting on my IS suit, I summoned [Byakushiki]' s control panel to begin my adjustments.

(Mn...[Setsura] does take up too much energy. Can't I control that a bit?)

As I continued to think about it, my eyes suddenly went dark. This isn't a metaphor, it's real.

"?"

"Guess who?"

Huh? Huh? Huh? Wh-Who's that?

The voice that came from behind me sounded even more mature than my classmates, but the slightly cheeky tone made it feel as if it's a kid who loves to play pranks.

The fingers covering my eyes were somewhat dry and icy cold. The fingers felt really comfortable, and I was in a daze for several seconds.

"Okay, time's up."

I turned around to see who's the one who released her fingers and said that,

"...Who are you?"

She's a girl I don't know. No, looking at the conversation just now, I don't think that answered the question.

"Ufufu."

The girl in front of me has a tie that signifies that she's from the second year. Showing a happy smile as she stared at this puzzled me, she then raised a fan that I had no idea where she got it out from and raised it to her lips. Looking at her again, this second year is really enigmatic.

She looks rather carefree and gives off a rather relaxing presence that I don't hate. But the smile on her face is of the complete opposite. It looks teasing, and in another sense, I can't calm down.

In other words, I'm worried that 'She would do something to me'. It feels that she's hard to read, really mysterious...am I praising her too much?

"Are you—"

"Ah."

The second year looked behind me, and I turned to look there to see what's going on—

"Fooled you♪!"

My face got smacked with the fan.

"..."

Huh..."

"Bye bye! Got to hurry up, or else you'll get scolded by Orimura-sensei."

"Huh?"

Feeling a bad premonition, I turned to look at the clock on the wall. It's already 3 minutes past the start of lesson time.

"UAAAAHHHHHH! OH-OH NO—I'M DEEEAAADDDD!!!"

I again turned to look at that culprit, only to see that there's no one there now.

"...And that's your excuse for being late?"

The instructor from hell, Orimura Chifuyu didn't have a look of sympathy on her face at all.

"No, well, about that? I'm saying that a girl just walked up to me—"

"Say the girl's name out then."

"I-I told you that I met her for the first time!"

"Oh? So you put 'Chit-chatting with a girl you met for the first time' as a higher priority and came late for lesson ?"

"No, that's not—"

There was no room for interruption at all.

"Dunois, prepare for [Rapid Switch] training, the target will be this idiot. Don't mind."

I MIND THAT!!

"..."

Having a hint of hope in my heart, I turned to look at Charl.

She returned me a radiant smile.

(That's it, Charl! You won't do such a reckless thing!)

"Then, Orimura-sensei, I'll start the training."

"Good."

GYAAHHH! CHARL'S SMILE ISN'T OF A MERCIFUL GODDESS BUT A HEARTLESS ANGEL!

Her IS floated into the air, and the particles of light gathered in her hands, forming the shape of a gun.

"Well, Charlotte...san?"

"What is it, Orimura-kun?"

GYAAAHH!! I'M SEEING VEINS ON HER FOREHEAD!! WHY-WHY'S THAT? WHY ARE YOU SO ANGRY, CHARL-SAN!!?

"Let's go, [Revive]."

"Hol-HOLD IT—"

BAM BAM BAM BAM BAM!!

My voice got overpowered by the sounds of bullets... GGYYYYYYAAAAAHHHHHH!!!

"That's what I'm saying! Please send me the live equipment over!"

"We can't grant that request, Cecilia Alcott. Your [Blue Tears] needs to provide us the actual combat data for the BT weapons, not live weapons."

"I know, I know that well...ahh, really, you're too rigid!"

After the 6th practical lesson ended, the changing room that was packed full of 2 classes of girls was filled with hot air and chattering.

Slightly further away, Cecilia was using one hand as she called the international line through the phone to haggle with the person in charge of her IS who was in her native country, England.

"Speaking of which, why do you need live weapons?"

"Uu...!"

The reason is simple and quick, but she's reserved about saying it out directly.

—Because an IS that only has BT weapons won't be able to beat Ichika-san's [Byakushiki].

(I'll lose if I can't pierce the shield and let it run out of energy.)

During the simple practical training that also included breaking, Cecilia was the only one who lost to Ichika.

Having lost to [Byakushiki]'s second phase that used energy quickly, Cecilia's pride was in a mess.

(Just me, just me...)

As she let out a painful and silent expression, the in-charge on the other side of the phone sighed.

"Listen up, Cecilia Alcott. Your mission is to collect the actual combat data of the BT weapons. Not to mention we have problems now since the new equipment was destroyed last month."

"Th-That's..."

"No need for excuses. Good bye."

Pak! The phone that was hung up left behind an empty beeping sound.

"AH, THIS IS SO IRRITATING!"

Cecilia raised her right hand as she wanted to throw the handphone away in fury.

"Ce-Cecilia? What's wrong?"

"...Nothing."

Charlotte was the one who called her. Having changed from her IS suit into her uniform, she was wiping the sweat off her hair.

(Charlotte-san's the least affected when [Byakushiki] entered [Second Shift]...)

Even though the reason was that all her weapons used live ammunition, Charlotte was still really strong even if they were taken away.

(Right now, the ranking order is Laura-san, Charlotte-san, Rin-san, then Houki-san, Ichika-san and me...)

She sighed heavily. On seeing the IS data value [BT weapon synchronization rate at 37%], her heart felt really heavy.

(Though I heard that I can continue the lasers at will when the synchronization is at its maximum...)

Is it true? She couldn't help but think.

(I've never been able to use them like this successfully...should be just in theory...)

Speaking of which, Cecilia was the only one amongst the national cadets with an 'A' grade in compatibility with BTs.

Because of that, she had the privilege of entering IS Academy and having a personal machine. But since she couldn't get the data as expected, she didn't know how long these privileges would last.

"Haa..."

"Huh, well, Cecilia, let's just go to the cafe beside the cafeteria. I don't think you want to remain in a bad mood all this time, right?"

"You're right..."

Charlotte was still worried that Cecilia couldn't break out of her funk, so she continued on,

"Oh yeah, let's get Ichika and everyone along. It's better that way."

"...I'm not going if Ichika-san's going."

Just when Charlotte realized that she spoke the wrong words, it was too late. To Cecilia, who had lots of dignity, even if he was her crush, she still hated to face him as the loser; or at least that's how she would be now.

"Then how about the girls go, Cecilia?"

"Uu...you're right. Since Charlotte-san's so understanding, please pardon me for joining in."

Cecilia's mood improved as she looked up and walked towards her own locker.

Cecilia's footsteps regained her usual confidence. To her, this suited her best.

The next day, the school used the SHR[5A 8] and first half of the first period to hold a school meeting.

Of course, it's about the school anniversary that's held in the middle of this month.

(But with so many girls gathered over here...)

It's noisy, and if they get any louder, it'll be a ruckus.

"And now, we'll have our Student Council President explain."

The person who announced this calmly should be one of the Student Council members, and these words made the laughter subside quickly like the tide.

"Good morning, everyone."

"!?"

The girl with the second year tie stood on the stage. She's the one who appeared yesterday at the changing room.

I was about to shout out, but held back as I looked at her.

"Fufu."

As our eyes met, she showed a smile.

—Not good. What's with me? I feel like my heart's beating really hard...

I tried my best not to let others realize that my heart's wavering as I continued to listen to the Student Council President.

"Okay okay, I had to deal with a lot of things this year, so I couldn't say hello to everyone. My name's Sarashiki Tatenashi, and I'm your Student Council President. Nice to meet you."

The smiling Student Council President's charisma was able to charm everyone regardless of gender, as everyone below the stage applauded enthusiastically.

"Then, the important event this month is the school anniversary, so I'll allow for special rules. As for what's going on,"

With a refined movement, she pulled out her fan and shook it at her side. As if matching the movement, a hologram screen appeared in mid-air.

"I call it the **Every Club Fight For Orimura Ichika War** !"

PAN! The fan opened with a crisp sound, and with that, the large screen showed my photo.

"Wha..."

"

WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
...!!!???"

It wasn't a joke. The hall really shook because everyone cried out.

While I was still flabbergasted, everyone turned to look at me.

"Please remain quiet. Every year, the clubs will set up booths during the school anniversary and hold voting

events. Also, the school will provide special funds to the leading clubs. But I do feel that it'll be too boring if I do that this year—"

Sempai pointed at me with the fan.

"So we'll forcefully get Orimura Ichika to join the number one club!"

Everyone screamed crazily.

"UWAAAAAAHHHHHH!!!"

"THAT'S GREAT!! PREZ'S THE BEST!!!"

"IF THAT'S THE CASE, WE'LL DO OUR BEST... WE'RE GOING FOR IT!!!"

Please don't treat the autumn tournament like that...

But, am I really that valuable? I can't take part in games for girls, and I'm not the manager type.

"Speaking of which, I never agreed to this..."

Still feeling dazed, I turned to look at the Student Council President.

"Aha♪."

And then she winked back at me.

...No, even if you wink at me like that, it still troubles me...

"VERY GOOD VERY GOOD VERY GOOD! MY FIGHTING WILL'S STARTING TO BURN!"

"LET'S GATHER AFTER SCHOOL! EVERYONE, GATHER YOUR IDEAS! WE'LL DECIDE ON WHAT TO DO USING VOTES!"

"IT'LL BE BEST IF WE GET NUMBER ONE. AT WORST, WE MUST ALSO GET NUMBER ONE!"

These girls just can't be stopped once they're motivated.

And thus, even though I only heard this for the first time and didn't agree to this, this war over me began.

After school, on the same day, our class had a last minute meeting in our classroom. Right now, everyone's deciding on what booth the class should set up.

"Erm..."

As the class representative, I have to gather everyone's views, but—

(The content includes 'Orimura Ichika's Cowbot Club', 'Play Twister with Orimura Ichika', 'Eating biscuit sticks with Orimura Ichika' and 'Play King's Game with Orimura Ichika'...wait, what's going on?)

"I refuse."

HUUUUUUUUH!!! The cries echoed throughout like a surround system.

"You-You idiots! You would be happy about setting up such a booth!?"

"I'll be happy! I promise!"

"That's right, that's right! You have the duty to service the girls till they're happy!"

"Orimura Ichika's shared property!"

"The other classes were all chattering about, and our club sempais have been really naggy."

"Just treat it as if you're helping others!"

"You must have the Messiah attitude!"

What's with this nonsense? Speaking of which, what am I to do...

I looked around for help, but Chifuyu-nee herself wasn't around anymore.

"It seems like it'll take quite some time, so I'll head back to the staff room first. Tell me the results later."

Uwaa, onee-sama's really gentle.

"Yamada-sensei, we can't use these weird ideas, right?"

"Huh? You, you want my suggestion?"

Pull yourself through, Vice-Homeroom Teacher.

"Huh, erm...mn, I-I think the eating biscuit sticks together sounds good....?"

The vice-homeroom teacher Yamada Maya-sensei blushed as she said this...damn it, she's a landmine.

"Anyway, how about some normal suggestions?"

"How about a maid café?"

Laura was the one who came up with the idea...huh?

Everyone, including me, was stunned.

"It should be popular amongst the customers, right? And we can earn revenue if we sell food and drinks. I remember that outsiders can enter school through an invitational ticket system, so a lot of people would want a place to rest."

Though she's saying that with the same old cold tone, these words really differred from her image a lot, and everyone in class had to spend some time to understand.

"Huh, erm...how does everyone feel about this?"

Even though it's by majority, all the girls still looked stunned.

"Isn't this good? We'll just let Ichika be in charge of being the butler or cooking."

Charl said that, probably to speak up for Laura as she attracted all the girls' attention.

"ORIMURA-KUN, AS A BUTLER!!? ME, ME!!"

"AND THEN, AND THEN!?"

"WHAT ABOUT THE MAID OUTFITS? I'M IN CHARGE OF MAKING THE CLOTHES IN THE DRAMA CLUB, SO I CAN SEW THEM!"

The class just went intense out of a sudden. I feel that I'll be pouring cold water over the girls if I hold back their passion at this point, so I'm hesitating on whether I should stop them.

(Oh well, let's just treat it as a café with very weird uniforms.)

"I have a correspondence if we need to get maid outfits , including the butler outfit. I'll go ask if I can borrow it."

As unexpected as ever, the one who said that was Laura.

Huh? Everyone widened their eyes. Laura suddenly felt that things weren't going right, so she deliberately coughed a few times.

"—Ahem, I mean Charlotte will be the one asking."

Laura's face turned a little red, perhaps feeling shy due to the overwhelming stares.

And then, Charl, who got called, revealed a puzzled look.

"Huh, erm, Laura? Are you talking about last month...? "

"Yup."

"I-I'll go ask. Don't be angry if I can't get them."

Facing Charl who was looking anxious as she said that , all the girls in class replied back with confidence and in unison,

"We won't be angry!"

And thus, Class 1-1 decided to set up a modified maid café. A 'Service Café'.

"...Anyway, class 1 decided to set up a café."

In the staff room, I concluded the results of the meeting to Chifuyu-nee beside me.

"I really want to say that you chose something really uninteresting, but there should be something else to that, right?"

"No, well...it's something like a, Cosplay Café. Ya."

"Who's the one who came up with that? Tajima? Or is it Liadi? I guess it's one of the people who like to create quite the ruckus, right?"

"Well..."

I'm somewhat hesitant on whether I should tell the truth to Chifuyu-nee who's giving a wry smile.

But never mind, I still decided to say it out.

"Laura."

"..."

Chifuyu-nee widened her eyes. Uu, I really hate this silence.

After blinking twice, she started laughing.

"Fu...hahaha! Bodewig? That's really unexpected. But... ku, hahaha! She was the one who came up with the idea of opening a cosplay café? Her personality really changed so much."

"So you're really surprised...aren't you?"

"Of course I am. I know her past, so this really surprises me. Fu-Fufuu, she said that she wanted to open a cosplay café...HAHA!"

After laughing a while, Chifuyu-nee rubbed away the tears in her eyes that came out due to the laughter. Was that really funny...

To the other teachers in the staff room, it seems that it's a rare scene for Chifuyu-nee to have such a reaction as everyone widened their eyes and stared at her in a mystified manner.

"Mn, mnn—well, is that all for the report?"

After noticing her surroundings, she cleared her throat and adjusted her tone.

"Yes, just this."

"Then, you just need to write the equipment and food needed on this request form. Remember to send it back in a week. There's no problem, right?"

(Uu, looks troublesome...)

"There's, no, problem, right?"

"Ye-Yes."

Chifuyu-nee's forceful tone made me straighten my back and answer.

She's still very scary when she's like this. That's Chifuyu-nee for ya.

(But Chifuyu-nee did change a lot as compared to the past.)

I don't really remember but Chifuyu-nee was really scary when she was in middle school. She was like a sharp blade, that others would be hurt if they touched her. Even I would feel scared of her as a family member.

(But ever since I went to High school, she became somewhat more sociable. Speaking of which, she often hung out with Tabane-san...)

The peerless genius, Shinonono Tabane. Most likely, the only person in this wide world who can stand side by side with her is Chifuyu-nee.

--I understand that, and I dare say that. That's true.

"Orimura, there will be all sorts of military personnel and IS related enterprise representatives coming in from different countries. Normally, ordinary people are not

allowed to take part, but the school will be giving out an entrance ticket to every student for them to enter. You need to think of who you want to invite."

"Ah, okay."

The report to Chifuyu-nee ended like that. I bowed and walked out of the staff room.

After hearing the sliding door shut behind me, I sighed deeply.

"Yo."

"..."

The moment I walked out of the staff room, there's a girl waiting for me already.

That's a face I would never forget. She's the Student Council President, Sarashiki Tatenashi.

"...What is it?"

"Hm? Why are you so wary of me?"

"Do you want me to say the reason..."

Whether it's the fiasco because I was late or the commotion during the school meeting, this sempai's the culprit behind them all, and yet she's staring at me happily as if nothing had happened.

"Ah, I want to say that I'd forget it if it wasn't shocking at the beginning."

"I won't forget it."

After saying that, I headed to the arena.

The sempai near me naturally walked alongside me.

"..."

Seems like it'll be difficult to shake her off.

I do feel that this person's giving off a fearsome presence, yet she doesn't strike me as strong—well, it's like 'some situation' guided her here.

"Relax, relax, don't be so unhappy. It won't be beneficial to you if you shut yourself in since you are young, you know?"

"Whose fault do you think that is?"

"Mn—how about I switch the conditions around a bit? This person in front of you here will be your IS instructor from today onwards, okay?"

"No need. I have a pile of coaches."

Houki, Rin, Cecilia, Charl and Laura. My fingers are all used up just counting them.

"Uu-n, don't say that. I'm the Student Council President after all."

"Huh?"

"Wait, don't you know? The IS Academy Student Council President is—"

Just when Sarashiki-sempai intended to continue on, a girl in front of me came running over with dust flying. No, wielding a bamboo sword with one hand and attacking.

"GET READY—!"

"Wha...?"

I stood between both of them in reflex, and sempai evaded me fluidly as she pulled out the fan.

"Moving without hesitation...not bad."

Unbelievably, sempai used the fan to block the bamboo sword and then knocked a karate chop with her left hand.

As the girl fell, the glass window shattered.

"Wha, what's going on now?"

A barrage of arrows aimed at sempai's face as they flew by. Looking closely, there's a girl at the window on the opposite school building dressed in a hakama and pulling a Japanese bow. Wha-What the heck!

"Lend me that."

She kicked the bamboo sword that's lying beside the girl and grabbed it as it flew in midair. She then threw it out.

The bamboo sword went through the shattered glass window and landed pin-pointedly in the middle of the archer girl's forehead, beating her beautifully.

"WATTTCCCCHHH MMEEEE!!!"

BAM! A third assassin came rushing out of the tool cabinet on the corridor.

She had boxing gloves on her hands. Taking light steps , she swinged over the heavy punches that were full of body weight.

"Fufu. How energetic...oh yeah, Orimura Ichika-kun."

"Wha-What?"

"I think you don't know about this, so let me tell you. In IS Academy, the Student Council President is the proof of something."

Sempai covered her mouth with the half-opened fan and said happily.

During this time, she continued to dodge the boxing girl's ferocious attacks with little movements. That's really amazing.

"The Student Council President is the leader of all the students—"

She dodged the right straight punch in a circle-like manner. *Tonk*...she kicked herself off the ground and leaped into the air.

"And also the strongest."

And then, she sent a spear-like spinning kick, sending the boxing girl flying back into the cupboard as if it was a rewind, unable to say anything.

"...That's how it is."

She spun around and let the fan that was let loose when she did the spinning kick to fall back into her hand before it landed on the floor, and then held down her floating skirt.

"Did you see it?"

"No, I didn't!"

"That's good."

Fufu, sempai laughed twice and closed the fan.

"...So what's the situation now?"

"Hm? As you can see, this weak me often gets in danger, so I need a knight to protect me."

There's a liar in front of me.

"You just told me you were the strongest."

"Oh my, you saw through me."

She chuckled happily again...it's not important at all, but this way of laughing is rather elegant and really suits her. What kind of person is she...?

"Well, basically, anyone will come and attack the strongest Student Council President. If she wins, that person will become the Student Council President."

"Haa...that's quite chaotic."

"Yup, but ever since I became President, almost nobody was able to beat me. So just now, that was."

She pulled towards me and dragged my face close in—WAAH! THAT'S CLOSE! THAT'S TOO CLOSE!!

"You caused that, you know?"

"Wh-Why?"

The gentle aromatic fragrance soothed my nerves.

The fragrance made me lose my sanity, and my heart started to pound wildly.

"Hm? Well, since I put you as the prize of this month's school anniversary, the sports club that won't be able to get first like the fighting type clubs can only use force. They want me to step down, cancel the rules of the prize and get you at the same time."

These are just wild guesses. I should add that, but I feel that her guesses are mostly right.

It seems that she has a talent of reading people's minds . In other words, she seems like she can tell that my heart's pounding like crazy. That's really scary.

"Then, I would like you to come over to the Student Council office for a visit. Please come along. There's tea for you to drink."

"Huh?"

"So I take it as you want to go?"

To refuse her...seems like I can't do that.

"I'll go."

"Mn, very good, this onee-san likes to see Orimura Ichika-kun being so honest."

"Ju-Just call me Ichika."

"Really? Then call me Tatenashi. You can call me Ta-chan."

"I don't really mind either way. Haa..."

I raised my hands to surrender. It seems like I can't disobey this person in front of me.

Seeing that I gave up my struggle, sempai looked delighted. Unlike the mature smile she showed just now,

she looks really immature, as if a childish prank had just succeeded.

"...How long are you going to remain blank over there?
"

"I'm so sleepy...it's so, late already..."

"Do your work."

"Got it..."

For some reason I hesitated once I heard such a voice from the other side of the door.

"Hm? What's wrong?"

"No, I think I heard that voice somewhere before..."

"Ah, that's right. She should be inside now."

After saying that, Tatenashi-sempai opened the door.

The heavy door was pushed aside without any noise, and it seems to be a rather good door.

"I'm back."

"Welcome back, Prez."

The one who welcomed her back was a third year girl. This girl with glasses and braided hair looked like a ' resolute yet efficient' person as she held the files with one hand in a manner that suited her.

The girl who was standing behind her surprised me.

"Wa...it's Orimu~"

It's Nohohon-san[5A 9]...wait, that's strange. Why?

"Mn, please sit over there. Tea will be served soon."

"O-Okay..."

Nohohon-san looks like she's six times more sleepy than usual. Though her face went up by about 3cm when she noticed me, it immediately sank back onto the table.

"We're now facing the guest. Pull yourself through."

"I, can't, do, it...I'm, sleepy. Can, I...go, back, now...?"

"Nope."

With her last ounce of hope, Nohohon-san asked the question word by word, but the third year's merciless answer crushed her completely.

"Huh, Nohohon-san? Are you tired?"

"Mn. Night...day...collecting...posters..."

"U-Um?"

"Oh my, you two are calling each other by nicknames. You two sure have a good relationship."

Tatenashi-sempai, who became President in only her second-year, let the third year sempai deal with the brewing of the tea as she raised her arms elegantly and sat down on her seat.

"Ah- no, well, I don't know her real name..."

"HUUUUUH~?"

PAM! Nohohon-san stood up, and for the first time, I saw her shout loudly,

"How mean~ you kept calling me by a nickname, so I thought that you liked me~..."

"No, well...sorry."

Just as I bowed down in apology because of this really insolent act, the third year sempai who served the tea here interrupted.

"Don't lie, Honne."

"Hehehe. I got seen through. Got it, nee-san~"

"Nee-san?"

"Yes, my name's Nohotoke Utsuho. My sister here is called Honne."

Nohotoke Honne. This name...it's basically Nohohon-san if I shorten her name.[5A 10]

"Huh? So you sisters joined the Student Council?"

"Yup. The Student Council President has to be the strongest, but the other members can join as long as it doesn't reach the maximum capacity, so I recruited those who grew up with me."

Tatenashi-sempai explained to me.

Oh, so these three grew up since young? Is it because Nohohon-san just said that 'We served as maids for generations'?

"Besides, it's my duty to serve ojou-sama."

Utsuho-sempai poured the tea that was just brewed into the cup.

She looked rather refined when she did that, and she gave off the vibe of a secretary or a head maid.

"An, don't call me ojou-sama."

"Sorry, I just said it out of habit."

Seeing how the conversation went, I think the Sarashiki family should be of some nobility?

I can tell that from some of Tatenashi-sempai's actions.

"Orimura-kun, please have some tea."

"Tha-Thank you."

Utsuho-sempai poured some tea for me as well. Her courteous attitude made me cautious.

"Honne, take the cake out from the fridge."

"Okay~ I'm very efficient when I'm awake~"

Are you serious...

Her movements were still as slow as ever, and she looked like she was going to fall from the way she walked, maybe because she was still groggy.

But unexpectedly, Nohohon-san didn't fall as she safely served the cake.

"Orimura--, the cake—the cake here's super super super super super super super~...delicious-"

She continued to say that as she ate her own slice of cake...well.

"Don't do that, Honne, the Nohotoke family's customs will be doubted."

"No problem, no problem. It's delicious. ♪"

"..."

The younger sister continued to focus on licking the buttercream off the base of the cake, but the strict elder sister wouldn't allow her to do that.

GONCK! Utsuho-sempai used her fist to slam down on her.

"Uee...it hurts..."

"Do you still want me to hit you, Honne...if that's the case, it can't be helped."

"I haven't said anything yet~ I haven't said anything at all~"

Nohohon-san's eyes were tearing up.

"Okay okay, I know you two siblings have quite the good relationship, but we have a guest in front of us now ."

"I'm very sorry."

"So-Sorry..."

The three members of the Student Council turned to me again.

"Anyway, let me tell you what's going on. Ichika-kun, since you haven't joined a club yet, we received a lot of complaints. It'll be very serious if the Student Council doesn't force you to join a club."

"So that's why you set up the school anniversary voting battle...?"

That's really troublesome. I'm already busy with IS training. I don't even have time to join any club activities.

On a side note, having clubs that are formed by girls only is really, well...unreasonable. I can't join them, and I can't handle the mental stuff. What happens when it's a sports club? I don't even have a male changing room and bathroom.

"Thus, as a condition for exchange, from now until the school anniversary ends, I'll be giving you special training, including IS, of course."

"Please allow me to refuse."

"Don't say that. Ah, please have some tea. It's nice."

"...Itadakimasu."

The fragrance of the tea reached my nose. I gently took in that soothing aroma and gently sipped the red tea that was at just the right temperature.

"This tea's nice."

"Utsuho-chan's red tea is the best in the world. Next, please try the cake."

As sempai recommended me, I tried the strawberry cake that had lots of buttercream on it.

Even though there's a lot of cream, the cake tasted nice but not sickening. It's really smooth and silky...hold on, when did I become a gourmet reporter?

"And then allow me to teach you."

"No, I said that there's no need. Why do you need to teach me?"

"Hm? The reason's simple. Because you're too weak."

As she answered that really smoothly, I didn't catch her words for a while.

But the moment I realized what she said, I felt...really unhappy about that.

"I don't think I'm as weak as what you said."

"Nope, you're weak, very weak, so weak that you're pitiful. That's why I said that I'll train you until you're at least decent."

Of course, I don't have the patience to remain calm after being told that by her.

The moment I realized it, I found myself pointing at Tatenashi-sempai.

"Then let's have a match. I'll listen to you if I lose."

"Mn, okay."

That smile on her face showed the words 'You fell into my trap'.

...Uh oh.

"Erm...this is?"

"Yup, that's a hakama."

"I know that!"

Tatenashi-san and I were facing each other on the tatami dojo after school. Right now, we look like martial artists from ancient Japan who had been wearing the white torso guard and the navy blue hakama.

There's only sempai and I in the dojo. The Nohotoke sisters seemed like they had work, but well... then again, Nohohon-san's actually a Student Council member.

"Okay, as for the winning conditions, you win if you can make me fall onto the ground."

"Huh?"

"But on the other hand, I win if you can't continue to fight. Will that do?"

"Huh, no, wait, hold on..."

Isn't that too disadvantageous to sempai? Just when I wanted to say that, she said first,

"I'll win anyway, so it doesn't matter."

"..."

Even though I knew it was a low-level taunt, I couldn't help but get angry as I got into a defensive stance.

When I was learning kendo at Houki's dojo, I also trained in ancient barehanded martial arts in anticipation that the blade would break.

My body already remembered that skill, and I wouldn't forget it completely even though I'm somewhat estranged to it.

"I'm coming over."

"Anytime you're ready."

The smile didn't vanish from Tatenashi-san's face at all , and the casual expression made her all the more enigmatic.

(Anyway, let's try this.)

I firmly slid my foot over and grabbed Tatenashi-san's arm. However...

"!"

She immediately countered and grabbed me, and my body got tossed hard onto the tatami mat.

For a moment, I lost my breath. I felt tremendous pressure within my lungs, and after choking out some air , Tatenashi-san's finger seemed to be searching for my carotid artery as she stroke me.

"U..."

"That's win number one."

After letting me realize that she could kill me in that situation, Tatenashi-san let go of me.

(She's strong...!)

I can't beat Tatenashi-san if I don't have the attitude of going against Chifuyu-nee. That's what I thoroughly realized.

But if that's the case, I can't take action casually. Things just got sticky.

"..."

"Mn? You're not coming over? I'm going over then!"

Don. She suddenly closed in on me quickly. The way she slid on the floor was perfect. No wait, that's one of the secret ancient techniques 'No Rhythm'[5A 11]

Simply put, humans live through 'rhythm'. Besides the heartbeat, there's the breathing rhythm, so for example, the so-called 'Matching presence' is a positive show of this. In contrast, a 'non-matching presence' would be the opposite.

An attack that deliberately messes with the rhythm of the opponent is called a 'Striking Rhythm'[5A 12], and one that controls is called the 'Equal Rhythm'[5A 13].

And the move of the highest class causes people to be unable to feel the rhythm. The martial art move that uses the undetectable rhythm is called 'No Rhythm'.

"Uh oh—"

With the sounds of three hits, my elbows, shoulders and abdomen got hit lightly, and while my body stiffened in reflex, sempai landed her palms on my chest.

"Kaa, haa...!"

The air in my lungs got forced out, shaking my consciousness. And then—

"Watch your feet."

ZUDON! My back landed hard on the tatami mat.

And as I got thrown- it seemed that she used the 'penetrate'[5A 14] move to touch several of my joints. Even though I tried to get up immediately, the slight numbness made it hard for me to move around easily.

"That'll be two wins for me. Do you want to fight on?"

Her clothes completely unruffled, Tatenashi-san gave me a gentle smile.

But since I'm a guy, how can I give up so easily!

"It's not over yet. I can still fight...!"

But even though I said that, my body was still unable to move.

I breathed in deeply, and got myself up as I exhaled.

"Mn, hardworking guys are really amazing."

"You flatter me..."

Deep inside, I commanded my legs that were wobbling, and barely managed to stop myself from wobbling any further.

Tatenashi-san faced me again. Even though she's been giving me the same smile all this time, to me, it's a terrifying face that's hidden deep within.

It's like a thick fog in the forest that doesn't let anyone see what's inside. Humans aren't afraid because it's thick. They're afraid of the unknown inside that they can't grasp.

This can be applied to this person.

The iron wall-like smile made me unable to guess her true thoughts.

However, I can't say that it's a lying smile.

Tatenashi-san's been smiling all this while, but I'm really at a loss because I don't know why she's smiling.

(Calm down...calm down...I'm not facing a monster. Since my opponent's a human who can stand on both legs, there's a way to beat her.)

I took two deep breaths.

A candle flame that wouldn't waver appeared in my head as I calmed myself down and gathered my concentration.

"Mn, you're serious now."

"..."

Facing my silent response, sempai responded silently as well. At this moment, there's a really tense feeling between us, as if both sides are about to use their killer moves.

(Got to have the determination to take down the opponent in one hit...let's go!)

I utilized the Shinonono ancient martial arts hidden technique 'No Rhythm' to break sempai's 'still' with my ' move'—and attacked before my opponent could.

"!"

Perhaps feeling that my speed now is completely different from behind, Tatenashi-san took half a step back to gain a suitable distance.

(I win!)

Before sempai's foot landed, I reached out and grabbed her arm to swing her—out?

ZUDONL!

"Kahaa!"

This time, I was the one who fell forward as my chest landed directly on the tatami mat. I started coughing, and my consciousness became all blurry.

But I used my momentum to suppress this unbearable feeling and grabbed Tatenashi-san's ankle.

"Oh my."

"It's my win now!"

I forcefully swung her ankle up and grabbed the body of the opponent that was flying back.

"That's too naive."

Normally speaking, I did grab her from under her armpits, and yet sempai used her right hand to support herself on the tatami mat in an unbelievable manner. She then spun around to shake me off before landing a Capoeira kick.

"What?"

"Your attack's not too bad."

(Martial arts and ancient martial arts and Capoeira[5A 15]? Just who the hell is she?)

I finally realized what she meant by the 'strongest'. It isn't just some bluff or daydream, but a down-to-earth fact.

Even so, I can't lose to her.

Right now, I can only hang on. This is the only part I can't succumb, a man's determination.

"GYYAAAAAHHH!!!"

Even though my body got kicked, I landed on my hands and feet before rushing forward.

In front of me, sempai already recovered as she smiled.

(At this point, I'll use any means! Anyway, I can't lose here!)

I hastened myself again and swung my fist hard at sempai.

—In the end

"Ahh..."

"Kya~"

Sempai's torso guard was completely open, and the cleavage that covered in the bra bounced out.

The breasts under the high-quality laced underwear looked quite voluminous, and they definitely won't lose to Houki's...no wait, what am I thinking!?

"Ichika-kun no ecchi."

"What?"

Even if I want to find an excuse, this situation's completely my fault.

Wavering inside, I'm full of openings. Sempai didn't shriek at all as she quickly pushed my hand aside.

(Ahh, I'm deeaaaaddd!!)

And at the next moment, I fully experienced what's called an aerial jumbo.

How many times did I get hit by sempai? I lost count after the seventeenth hit, and gave up on it—actually, I fainted.

"Onee-san's underwear show's pretty expensive, you know?"

Kukuku. In the end, I seemed to hear a happy laugh.

"Where did he go? Really...that bride's a failure."

Today, Laura was handling Ichika's IS training.

As the second term started, Ichika suggested that it was really inefficient to have everyone coaching him. Everyone felt that it was true and thus decided to do it in a routine manner.

As the special training was to begin today, Laura, who was often lucky at the critical moment, was the first person to coach him...but even though she was lucky, they just played janken.

(Speaking of which, that guy's been spending too little time with me. That's preposterous.)

Moving quickly, Laura gradually slowed down before stopping.

(Is he avoiding me...?)

Obviously looking somewhat anxious, Laura tried to shake away her cowardly thoughts as she shook her head .

(No, there's no problem! No problem, no problem...I guess.)

However, once this idea popped up in her mind, it was hard for a girl's fragile heart not to be clouded.

Right now, Laura's heart was being taken by some mysterious anxiety. Her impulses made her want to use the IS private communicator to check Ichika's location, something that was against the rules.

(Nobody's looking...I won't be spotted...Okay, it's alright. I just need to activate it for a short while and get the data...)

I'm still feeling guilty, right? Laura looked around to check the situation, something rare for her.

(Ve-Very good. Now I just need to activate my IS in stealth mode.)

"..."

She held back her crazily beating heart *DOKI DOKI* and secretly activated the IS.

"Hey."

DOKI!!

"Wha-What is it?"

Suddenly being called, Laura tried to cover her own actions as she turned around with killing intent.

--And the person standing behind her was Chifuyu.

"What hideous things are you doing? Pull yourself together."

"In-Instructor..."

PAM! The rare attendance book attack appeared.

"Call me Orimura-sensei."

"Ye-Yes...Orimura-sensei..."

Even Laura couldn't look up at Chifuyu easily. No, more accurately, she couldn't beat Chifuyu's overwhelming presence.

"Are you okay? I just saw Orimura in front of the sick bay."

"Huh--? Wh-Which sick bay!!?"

"Don't be anxious. How irritating. He's at the sick bay on the first level of the club building."

"The sick bay at the first level of the club building..."

Seemingly repeating herself, Laura bowed to Chifuyu and intended to run.

...But Chifuyu stopped her before she moved.

"Bodewig, I must remind you first that as a personal IS pilot, it's against the rules to activate an IS outside the designated areas, and also against international treaty."

"I-I understand!"

Laura answered as a matter of fact, but her tone sounded really unstable, probably because her guilty conscience was working against her.

"The-Then, I'll be leaving first."

"Okay."

Walking 5 meters away from Chifuyu, Laura controlled herself, trying not to hasten herself, but once she passed that area, she started running.

Seeing her student like that, Chifuyu murmured to herself,

"Good grief."

GYA GYA, *GYA GYA*.

The trees that were swaying with the wind let out that sound.

I felt the heat that belonged to the beginning of summer as I continued to run to somewhere.

(I need to hurry up.)

For some reason, I knew that.

My running legs were affected by the heat and gradually slowed down.

"Ah..."

There's a person in front of a well.

That's a beautiful woman with glamorous black hair tied high, wearing a red and white miko outfit.

For some reason, I felt that my heart was about to stop, and naturally stopped.

She gradually walked over, yet I couldn't see her face.

I know that she's beautiful, but I don't know who that face belongs to.

But my heart was fulfilled. Soon after—

"~♪~♪~♪..."

I heard a gentle humming in my ears and gradually regained consciousness.

(Uu...?)

At that moment, the sharp sunlight caused me to frown.

On noticing my reaction, the person who realized that I was awake brought her face to me as she looked like she wanted to block the sunlight.

"Are you awake?"

"Sem...pai...?"

Tatenashi-san's face is right beside me....speaking of which, Tatenashi isn't a girl's name, right?

"Hm? That's a name exclusive to the Sarashikis. I'm the 17th generation of the Sarashikis."

"I see..."

Still not fully awake, I answered blankly.

...Hm? Hold on, that's strange. Did I just say something...?

"No wait!"

Suddenly realizing the problem of the position, I was completely awake.

I thought the inexplicably soft and nice-smelling object was a pillow!

"Wh-Wha-What are you doing?"

"Using my thighs as your pillow."

Gua...

Tatenashi-san was right. But even so, why must she give me the 'Don't ask any weird things' look?

Speaking of which, sempai changed already? The thigh pillow that's separated by the stockings actually feels so comfortable.

(DAMN IT! DAMN IT! DAMN IT! DAMN IT! DAMN IT! I'M GETTING A FEELING THAT I'M DEAD IF THIS KEEPS UP!)

Just when I wanted to get away from sempai's thighs, she quickly used her hands to press my shoulders down.

"WAH!"

Losing my balance, I again fell back to the soft thigh pillow. No, THIS CAN'T DO!

"ICHIKA!"

Opening the door forcefully and shouting was Laura.

After seeing sempai and me like that, she suddenly looked expressionless.

...Ahh, it's over. My teenage years are so short. I don't even have strength to see the boat lights.

"Eliminating the target."

Deploying her IS from the fingertips, Laura activated [AIC] and came slashing over—UWAAHH!!

"Fufu..."

Tatenashi-san smiled and quickly drew her fan and threw it at Laura's forehead.

The part that was nearly deployed completely made Laura want to back away.

Not letting go of this opening, sempai immediately rushed in. After grabbing the fan in the air, she opened it and quickly used the paper fan to press onto Laura's carotid artery.

"What...!?"

On seeing the precise ability and smooth execution of the methods, Laura and I were unable to hide our intrigue.

Though Laura has the [Absolute Defense] barrier, if sempai, who was a lot faster than Laura, really wanted to kill her from the beginning, she would have done so already. Realizing that she lost, Laura gritted her teeth and dispelled the IS.

"Mn, it's good that you can be obedient."

After saying that, Tatenashi-san patted Laura's head twice and then turned to me,

"Then, since things are done, let's go."

"Huh? Where...?"

"The third arena."

It seems like neither Laura nor I can beat this smiling sempai.

"That's strange? Ichika."

"I-Ichika-san? I heard that you were training in the fourth arena!"

Unexpectedly, Charl and Cecilia are both at the third arena. Maybe they're here to train? They're still in their IS suits even though their ISes are removed.

On seeing me, Laura and Tatenashi-san, an intriguing look appeared on their faces,

"...Who's that?"

I don't know if she's mindful of Tatenashi-san, but Cecilia asked that with an unhappy look.

...Why?

"Ce-Cecilia, that's the Student Council President."

"Ohh. Now that you mention it, I do remember seeing that face before."

Charl's feeling anxious about Cecilia, who's rude due to her bad mood, as she tries to round this off, but that kindness was wrecked cleanly. Charl really has it tough...

"Mn, don't be so mean. Ah, I'm now Ichika-kun's personal trainer, so we will have chances to talk to each other in the future."

"Huh? What does that mean?"

"Ichika-san!"

"Ichika you bastard...!"

"WAHH! HOL-HOLD ON! THIS-THIS IS, JUST THE OUTCOME OF OUR BATTLE! UU!"

Seeing the three girls close in, I said something that sounded like an excuse.

"We promised that the loser will have to listen to the winner, right?"

Sempai smiled as she said that...ahh, don't make things so complicated.

"Ichika!"

"Ichika-san!"

"Ichika!"

As expected, everyone wanted to fight with me. It's really hard to convince them.

Speaking of which, why did I come here in the first place...?

"Then let's begin. We'll follow the people with experience. Charlotte-chan and Cecilia-chan, please use the [Shooter Flow] to spin around in a [Circle Rondo] for him to see."

Shoot...what? Also, did she just say London?

"Huh? But these are shooting-type fighting maneuvers."

"I can do it, but...this is for helping out Ichika-kun, right?'

It seems like both of them realized it, and I'm the only one here who got left aside.

"Is that because his [Second Shift] has a long-ranged—shooting attack?"

Laura said that unhappily. It seems that she's still wary of sempai.

"Mn, you're rather sharp. But that's not all."

Tonk tonk. Tatenashi-san patted her palm with her fan and continued,

"In a shooting contest, the most important thing is the control. But if I have to classify a particle cannon that can't be fired consecutively, it's more like a sniper rifle. In other words, it has penetrating power that can kill in one hit. But everyone knows that Ichika-kun's shooting ability isn't suited for long-ranged combat."

Gua, I got hit on my wound while being ignored.

"So he would deliberatedly—"

"Defeat his opponent at close range."

"That's right. You're really sharp, Laura-chan."

Tatenashi-san opened her fan and praised Laura. Looking closely, there's the pretty words 'wonderful' (Migoto) on it— when-when did she change those words.. .

"...Laura-chan..."

Hm? What's with Laura? She looked stunned.

"Hey, what's with you? Are you alright?"

"No, nothing! Don't look at me!"

Laura turned her body and evaded my hand that was ready to be put on her shoulders before locking my hand and turning it backwards--- OOWWWWWWOWOWOWOWOW!!!

"Okay okay, lovey-dovey couple, Charlotte-chan and Cecilia-chan seem to be ready, so just watch."

Tatenashi-san clapped twice to call us.

Having been finally released from Laura's grasp, I rubbed my hurting arm and looked above the arena.

"Then, let's begin."

"Ichika-san, please watch this."

The [Revive Custom II] and [Blue Tears] spun at each other.

But the two units didn't move close to each other as they moved to the right. Both of them continued to fly around the cannon-hole shaped arena with their backs against the wall.

"I'm going over then, Cecilia."

"Bring it on."

The two gradually accelerating units soon started firing.

Both of them continued to spin about as they started evading while accelerating infrequently, returning fire in the meantime as they continued to move around quickly without slowly down.

"As expected of Cecilia, your skills are good...oh my."

"You too, Charlotte-san. I can't imagine that to be a second generation frame with that mobility."

As they continued to talk, both of them increased their firepower.

"This is..."

"Mn, Ichika-kun, you understand the great thing about this? They have to move at high speeds and shoot. They need to focus on dodging and shooting at the same time, so it's hard to do it like them if you can't be one with your machine."

The [PIC] controlling the machine was originally set to automatic, but it's hard to maintain such delicate motions in that situation. But if I set it to manual, I have to pilot the machine as well. To be honest, that's really difficult for me.

I have to stay calm. Don't think about anything else and just focus on those two things...not good, my head's hurting.

"Experience is important, but you need to have such high-level of control. Do, you, understand~"

Fuu. I got blown at the ear...wahh, when did she move behind me?

"I-ICHIKA?"

"WH-WHA-WHAT ARE YOU DOING?"

Noticing me, the two shooters raised their volumes.

"Ah."

And then, both of them gave a 'It's over' sound as they got hit by the torrent of gunfire.

Perhaps they lost control as the tremendous impact caused them to lose balance and knock into the wall.

"Are-Are you alright?"

"How could we be..."

"Of course not!"

Both of them got up and immediately rushed towards me.

"We were practising so seriously!"

"What were you fooling around with?"

"No, no, I wasn't fooling around..."

""YOU WERE FOOLING AROUND!!!""

"...Yes."

Remaining in the arena were me, who's being closed in , the enraged Charl and Cecilia, the chuckling Tatenashi-san and the sighing Laura.

Chapter 2: The Student Council President is a Felis Woman

Two days after that incident, I continued to work hard at the fierce training Tatenashi-san gave me.

Today, I again came to the third arena after school to practice my control training.

"Ichika likes older girls, huh."

I remembered Houki glaring at me.

Even though I tried to explain that it wasn't like that, nobody would believe me, whether it was Houki, Rin, Cecilia, Charl or Laura...damn it, that wasn't the case.

"Ichika-kun, you're slowing down. You need to concentrate."

"I-I got it."

I concentrated on the controls and aimed at the balloon in the middle of the arena.

The [Setsura] particle cannon on my left arm is on standby, and there's still 20 seconds left before it recharges.

Right now, I'm controlling my [PIC] manually, so I have to negate the shot's recoil on my own.

(But this is harder than I thought...)

Once I fail to control the recoil, I'll end up flying back at the wall with my head slamming hard into it.

(It's already hard enough to control this [Shooter Flow] ...)

I remember what Charl told me and cautiously move the legs that are one with [Byakushiki].

"Did you ice-skate before? You must let your toes slide on the icy surface, and glide out while making them stick to the floor."

"I don't understand..."

"You must use centrifugal force to control it, understand?"

"I don't understand, sensei."

"Such an inept student."

"Sorry..."

"Mn, I don't hate students who need to be taken care of . We-Well, I...do, like, them."

"I see. Thank you."

"...Ichika, you need to be a little sharper."

"Huh? Why are you so unhappy out of a sudden—"

"Well then, I have data to collect for my new equipment. Got to go."

...Why was Charl suddenly so unhappy? I don't understand even till now.

"Ichika-kun, concentrate~"

"Ye-Yes!"

"You're thinking about girls, right? Ichika-kun no ecchi !"

"No, that's not it!"

"So you're thinking of guys? That's really weird..."

"THAT'S NOT RIGHT!"

How-How tiring...

Anyway, what I could understand during these past days was that Tatenashi-san was really hard to understand.

Sempai's personality is so mature yet so childish at the same time. I really don't understand her.

She's like a cat that looks like she's inviting me, and then runs away from me.

(Yeah. It's not that I can't understand her, but that she doesn't let me understand her.)

Not revealing herself.

Not revealing her true self.

(That makes her really hard to deal with...)

Anyway, I need to focus on the controls. I again imagine myself to be skating on ice as I focus my weight on my toes and use the centrifugal force to adjust my movements.

(But since this is a shooting motion, would it be useful to me...?)

"Hey, over there. Don't think too much and concentrate."

"So-Sorry."

In fact, Tatenashi-san's guiding me really well. She even managed to easily explain the parts that the good coaches Charl and Laura don't know, and that really allowed me to understand easily.

Speaking of which, I seemed to have read it in a certain book before. The smartest person is the one who can explain in a way anyone can understand. Sempai really feels like that.

"Okay, you sped up. Try using [Ignition Boost] then."

"Huh?"

"[Ignition Boost]. From your circular motion, change it to a straight motion, break through the opponent's fire at one go and shoot the particle cannon at zero distance."

"Hold-Hold on! Asking me to do that..."

"Hurry up."

"I-I got it."

After I got told off by sempai, I focused on the [Ignition Boost]. Mn? AHHH!

BAM—!

"It hurts..."

As the [Shooter Flow] suddenly ended, I lost control and slammed hard into the wall.

"Hey hey. You can't stop the [Shooter Flow] end when you're doing [Ignition Boost]."

"It-It's tough."

"No can do. You must learn. Everyone other than Houki-chan can do it."

Now that she said this, I had nothing to say.

"Alright, get up and try again."

She explained things much more easily than any instructor, but she's even more strict than every single one of them. With that, Sarashiki Tatenashi-san's training continued.

"Oh my."

"Ah, erm, good afternoon, Nohotoke-sempai."

After the end of this special training, I met Nohohon-san's older sister Nohotoke-sempai as I was walking on the corridor. As I thought about how I should respond, sempai said to me.

"Just call me Utsuho. Since there's two Nohotokes, it'll be unclear who you're calling if you use that family name , right."

"Ah, okay, I'll call you Utsuho-san then."

"Mn."

Sempai nodded her face. Other than the face, she's different from Nohohon-san in other areas. But she does give an inexplicable feeling.

(This person should be similar to Takatsuki-san...)

I secretly nodded deep inside as I remembered the most reliable Takatsuki Shizune-san in class.

I tried to ask her what I was mindful of recently.

"Sorry, but can I ask a question."

"If I can answer it, sure?"

"Well, how's Tatenashi-san as a person?"

"What do you mean by that?"

"Huh-, it's more like, well, what was she thinking when she trained me?"

"Well, since it's her goodwill, just accept it."

"No, uu. You're right, but how should I put it..."

Seeing that I'm speechless, sempai seemed to find that intriguing as she smiled.

"Just joking."

This person in front of me would actually joke. Now that's a surprise.

"Tatenashi ojou-sama has all sorts of concerns, and I really don't know everyone of them."

"I see..."

Even though they've known each other for a long time, the situation may be as what she said.

Even so, the Nohotoke sisters should know about the other side of Tatenashi-san that me, and every student in IS Academy doesn't know of. Thinking about that, I really find it intriguing.

(Mn, since Tatenashi-san is really helping me now, I should just follow what she says.)

After making this conclusion, Utsuho-san lifted her finger and spoke up,

"Let me give you a piece of advice first. You'll be messed around by her no matter how you defend yourself or try to prevent it. Remember to save your energy."

"I-I see..."

I did feel that, but what she said made me confirm it.

Since Utsuho-sempai, who's older than Tatenashi-san by one year said this, she should be right.

"I'll eat as much as I can then."

"Very good. But that's if you can swallow the food."

What's with these ominous words? I'll be messed around by Tatenashi-san like that...

It suddenly feels cold.

"Goodbye then."

"Ah, yes, goodbye."

After saying goodbye to Utsuho-san, I again headed back to my room.

GACHUNK! I dragged my tired body and opened my room's door.

"Welcome back. Do you want dinner, a bath, or... do, you, want, me?"

--*BAM!* I closed the door and spent a second to analyze the situation.

"Erm..."

Right now, I'm standing in front of my own room's door at the first-year's dorm.

I checked that the nametag on the room has the word Orimura...well, I'm not mistaken. I didn't mistake it.

(Was that a dream or illusion? Anyway, Tatenashi-san can't possibly wear a naked apron[5B 1] and wait for me in real life. Hahaha.)

Thinking about this, I opened the door again.

"Welcome back. Do you want me? Do you want me? Or do, you, want, me?"

"THERE'S NO OPTION I CAN CHOOSE!"

"There is, but only one."

Standing in my room and waiting for me is Tatenashi-san in the naked apron.

WHA-WHAT IS THIS PERSON THINKING!?

"I intend to stay here from today onwards."

"Wha...?"

"Yeah~ I can brag to everyone! Only two girls managed to live in the same room as Ichika-kun before me. I'll become your third woman then."

"No, wait...huh? Isn't this the first year dorm?"

That's not the main problem. Unfortunately, my mind couldn't work well as it's in a mess.

"That's the power of the Student Council President."

Gua! Using that trump card all of a sudden!

What's wrong with this person? Or rather, is the Student Council alright?

"Ichika-kun's reaction is so kawaii~"[5B 2]

Tatenashi-san stared at me happily as she casually opened her fan. There's the words 'Everything is strange' —no, YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S STRANGE!

"ANY-ANYWAY! PLEASE WEAR SOME CLOTHES, CLOTHES!"

I couldn't look at the weirdly dressed sempai as I looked aside while saying. She seemed to find it really funny as she laughed before turning behind—WAAHHH !!

"JYAN♪! There's a swimsuit underneath it~"

"..."

"Fuu, are you disappointed?"

"HOW-HOW CAN I BE!"

...

I don't think I would be disappointed.

"Oh my. That's just a little revenge since I couldn't catch onto the summer wave."

Who are you taking revenge on?

(Speaking of which, even though she's wearing a swimsuit, it's a rather daring bikini...no, NO NO!)

I continued to shake my head, looking like I want to shake off the desire that would enslave me the moment I see her.

"Aha. You're blushing, aren't you?"

"Uu..."

Tatenashi-san looked like she wanted to show herself in the swimsuit as she stuck her butt out, looking really radiant.

I felt embarrassed as she got me, and since I'm really embarrassed about seeing a pretty girl in a swimsuit right in front of me, I do know that I'm blushing for sure.

(That's true, but you didn't have to explain it like that...)

After being pointed at, my face became even redder. I seriously thought through if there's any way to shake Tatenashi-san out of the room.

But after thinking for a few seconds, I saw that she already set up all her stuff, and sank my head heavily.

(She didn't just put full cardboard boxes; she already took out her luggage...)

It seems that it's useless to say anything.

"Haaa..."

I sighed deeply, feeling so dejected I wonder if my soul was long gone.

"..."

Houki quickly walked through the corridor of the first year dorm.

She was holding onto a bag, and smiling a bit at times.

The results of cooking the first time this month were good.

Expecting the response Ichika would give once he ate this masterpiece of hers, Houki couldn't help but naturally move faster.

(Because that guy always liked to eat this.)

That's the beancurd-skin sushi[5B 3] that her mom taught her directly. The slightly thick beancurd is soaked and cooked until the flavor enters it, and the rice and other condiments are added to it to achieve perfect balance.

After kendo training, Ichika would often eat a lot of this superb combination that had the sensation of the flavorful soy sauce and the aftertaste of the clear vinegar rice.

(...But he really changed.)

In Houki's memory, Ichika actions were just like a kid.

And now though he had a vestige of his former self left, he gradually gave off a mature man's presence.

Basically, he gradually became the type Houki liked.

(U-Um, I should train myself to be more like a woman. I don't know what kind of woman that guy likes, because there's no downsides to being a good woman.)

Confirming these thoughts in her heart, Houki happily accepted the accelerating heartbeat within her.

(Ichika was in a mess during training today, so he would want something to motivate himself, right? Yup, yup!)

Even though she didn't forget that this could be a reason for both of them to be together, she completely forgot that the other girls might be having dinner with Ichika.

Houki quickened her already fast pace, and soon arrived in front of Ichika's door.

(Alright. Got to act calm...)

Mm um. After clearing her throat, she silently knocked on the door.

KOK *KOK*

"..."

(Hm? Why isn't there a reaction?)

Maybe I knocked too softly? Thinking about this, Houki knocked even louder.

"Wha-What is it? Who's that?"

"It-It's me. I brought a reward for you."

"ACK! HOUKI!?"

(What's with that 'Ack'? Saying that out of a sudden...!)

Houki was a little unhappy.

But it would be bad to break this happy time, so Houki controlled her emotions.

"Can I go in?"

"...So-Sorry, you can't."

This infuriated Houki, and she was prompted by her impulses of anger as she opened the door.

The door wouldn't open, however, as it seemed that Ichika held the door up from inside.

"...Ichika."

"So-Sorry. How about next time? Okay? I promise, next time..."

As Houki felt weird about Ichika's tense voice, a girl's voice could be heard from within.

"Ichika-kun, what are you doing? Ah, I know. You are afraid that others will find out that you're having an affair, right?"

"--!"

It was a voice she had never heard before. Facing Ichika's attitude, Houki quickly deployed one of [Akatsubaki]'s Japanese swords and sliced the door in half.

"UWAAAH!!!"

"Ichika, you bastard...!"

"WAAAHHH! HOL-HOLD ON! IT'S A MISUNDERSTANDING!"

"WHAT MISUNDERSTANDING!? STAND RIGHT THERE!"

Facing the angry Houki, Tatenashi calmly called her,

"Okay, okay, calm down. I was joking."

"..."

But the problem was her dress up. Seeing the naked apron from the front, Houki gradually raised her sword.

"ICHIKA!!!"

"WH-WHY-WHY ME? SPEAKING OF WHICH, DIDN'T SOMETHING LIKE THIS HAPPEN BEFORE!?"

Even though Ichika barely managed to dodge it, the continuous attacks forced him to the wall.

"YOU BROUGHT A GIRL BACK TO YOUR ROOM AND DID SUCH AN INDECENT ACT...DON'T YOU KNOW ANY SHAME!?"

Swoosh! As the sound of wind being cut could be heard, the Japanese sword was swung down.

Though Ichika was prepared to die, Tatenashi stepped in between them.

"Oh my, how straightforward you are."

KLANG! With a blunt sound, the blade was stopped.

Tatenashi's right arm was holding onto a huge spear.

"!"

"Sorry, but onee-san will be rather bothered if you want to let Ichika-kun be a lost soul under the sword."

Casual sounding, she didn't leave any openings in her movement.

Tatenashi spun the spear in a circle manner and blocked the Japanese sword, pressing it down under her weapon before swinging it up.

"Wha...?"

The weapon Houki was so used to wielding flew out of her hands because of the leverage, leaving her dumbfounded.

The Japanese sword that was deflected by Tatenashi flew in the air and pierced into the wall hard.

"The winner's decided, I guess?"

"Gu...!"

Like Laura before her, Houki dispelled her IS to indicate surrender.

Whether it was Houki or Ichika she was facing, the brightly smiling Tatenashi gently declared her superiority over them.

"I see. Houki-chan's really well-versed at skills and martial arts. Even your cooking's amazing!"

"No, no, it's not really that good..."

"Don't be shy...mn, this beancurd-skin sushi's really nice--. Right, Ichika-kun?"

"Ye-Yeah. It's really nice."

And then, after convincing her, Houki accepted the current situation, and Tatenashi-san changed into her uniform before tasting the beancurd-skin sushi with us.

In primary school, I often ate the sushi that Houki's mom used to make at the dojo, and the reward Houki

brought over was about the same. I didn't just reminiscence it, because it's really nice.

"..."

"..."

But with Houki glaring at me, I really couldn't eat much.

It seems that she couldn't accept Tatenashi-san's existence, and her anger on me hasn't disappeared completely... is-is it my fault?

"That's strange? You two haven't eaten much. I'll help myself then."

Taking it and biting it, taking it and biting it... Tatenashi-san continued to down the remaining beancurd-skin sushi.

"Mn~ thank you for the food."

Licking her fingers, she palmed both hands together to thank Houki.

Regarding this, she's mysteriously attentive with the greetings, and Houki and I bowed back as thus.

"Okay, since Houki-chan's here, I'll explain this simply. "

"You're talking...about me?"

"That's right. It's about [Akatsubaki]."

Now that she mentioned it, Houki tightened her face.

"I heard that you can't activate [Akatsubaki]'s [One-Off Ability], right?"

"That's..."

Did you say that? Houki protested at me with her eyes, and I immediately shook my head.

That's right. After that incident, Houki's [Akatsubaki] was never able to activate [Kenran Butou] successfully.

Even though she tried to do that during training, the machine didn't react at all. However, it was indicated in the data registry, so it's unknown where the problem was .

"Basically, the [One-Off Ability] needs to be activated when the pilot's mental state is in sync with the IS. Do you remember the last time you activated it?"

"I-I do. Uu..."

"If you recreate that emotion, the IS will respond to you."

"I-I see.."

For some reason, Houki shyly lowered her head...hn? What's with you? Why are you looking over?

"Let me explain. In contrast to [Byakushiki]'s 1 to 0 removal ability, [Akatsubaki] has a 1 to 100 increase ability, and it seems like it can pass the energy to others. As expected of a machine Professor Shinonono made herself. It's really outstanding."

"So...this ability can also be used on anyone other than Ichika's [Byakushiki]?"

"Well, I can't really predict that to the details. Why don't you try it out?"

"I-I see."

Houki continued to peek at me. Why's that?

(Hm? Is she worried that I would be unhappy...)

A brainwave passed me as I placed my hand on Houki's shoulder,

"Don't mind, Houki. Wouldn't it be good if others could use it too?"

"...You're right."

For some reason, Houki lowered her head. Huh? What , what's wrong?

"Oh yeah. Ichika-kun and Charlotte-chan once tried to transfer energy. I read about records on energy transfer, but I was really shocked when you two were able to do it

. Normally speaking, it's difficult to transfer energy. You can't do that if your cores aren't in sync. She was able to do it so well in the midst of a real battle. That was amazing."

"Yeeah, Charl's really outstanding and smart, so she would be able to match the other person's characteristic no matter who she partners with."

"..."

DONK!!

"OW! WHA-WHAT ARE YOU DOING, HOUKI!?"

"Humph."

For some reason, Houki felt unhappy and kicked my leg... wha-what's with her?

"Fufu, you two have quite the delicate relationship."

"Huh?"

"...There's nothing delicate about it. Ichika's just too dumb."

"WHAT'S WITH YOU CALLING ME DUMB! CALLING ME AN IDIOT!? EVEN IF YOU'RE A CHILDHOOD FRIEND, I WON'T FOR—OWOWOWOWOW!!!"

"STOP PINCHING ME, HOUKI!"

"You're too noisy."

I got glared hard at by Houki. Uu, she really looks scary.

"Okay okay, I know you two have quite the good relationship, so let's talk about something else—erm, but before that, let's have some tea."

"Ah, please allow me."

"Really? Sorry to bother you then."

If I continue to stay here, it seems like Houki will be even more ferocious in her attacks, so I escaped to the simple kitchen to avoid the disaster and brewed tea.

(For some reason, Houki's mood swings seem to be very big recently...)

Boiling the water, I couldn't help but remember Houki recently.

She would occasionally show herself at the kendo club, and seemed to have gotten along well with them. She also got more friends.

She also became good friends with Rin, Charl and the rest. That's a good sign.

But right now, the important IS control isn't working too well for her. She wouldn't accept anyone's help with regards to that, so it's bothering me.

(Oh, the water has boiled.)

I put the tea leaves into the clay kettle and waited for them to open.

During this time, I heated up the guest teacups.

Seeing that both sides were done, I put them all on the tray and returned back to both of them with a slightly nervous look.

"So that's how it is! Well, how should I say it... fufu. That's really interesting."

"Isn't that right? Fufufu."

...Hm? Huh? Those two seemed to be on rather good terms now.

Did they talk about some secrets when I wasn't around ? Girls are often seen to be mysterious people because of that.

"Oh, Ichika, you're late."

"That's right that's right. I got some autumn manjuu[5B 4]. I'll get them out."

Both of them were smiling happily, as if they were really happy.

(...Well, I guess Tatenashi-san can make anyone collapse, whether it's male or female.)

My mind suddenly remembered the saying that's often used to describe Toyotomi Hideyoshi in the past 'Able to grasp people's hearts'[5B 5]. And I do feel that it fits the sempai in front of me.

(But that's not a title for a girl...)

However, since it suits her, it can't be helped. If I don't use this, maybe she'll be like the 'Cheshire Cat' or 'the female Tora-san'[5B 6]...no, wait, the last description doesn't really fit her, right?

"Hey, kid, stop looking at the elderly onee-san."

PA! I got knocked by the autumn manjuu box.

"We-Well..."

"Hm~? Don't tell me you're thinking of saying that you didn't look?"

"...Are-Are you going on a trip?"

"Oh, he changed the topic. What do you think, Houki-chan?"

"He's not showing the attitude of a man at all."

GUA! How can there be such a continuous barrage that's forcing me into despair! My HP's immediately almost zero.

"An-Anyway! I got tea ready!"

"Fufu. Seems like you got anxious. Well."

"Just let him go."

"You're right, Houki-chan's really magnanimous."

Ahaha, ufufu, the two girls continued with their laughter. I guess sitting on a bed of needles should apply to this, right?

"As for your question, I didn't go on a trip. The people I'm familiar with at the research center said that this Japanese product called autumn manjuu's really delicious, so I bought a lot of them."

"Are you talking about the research facility?"

"Actually, it's the development lab, of my beloved machine."

"Sempai has a personal IS?"

"Of course, the strongest in IS Academy isn't just for show."

On hearing that, Houki and I trembled.

The IS that the strongest in school, Tatenashi-san uses should be really amazing. How powerful would the battle prowess be?

"Uu, I'll look at your practice condition first. Don't look at me like this. I can really teach."

"Re-Really?"

Houki responded to Tatenashi-san's words...well, I was forced to make her my tutor anyway.

"No problems. It's my job to take care of my cute kouhais."

"Is-Is that so? I'll leave myself in your care then!"

"But I need to train you two separately, you know. I won't be able to concentrate on training you together."

"Uu..."

Houki seemed to be a little resistant to that, but finally answered,

"I understand."

As expected, she managed to realize the difference in ability between her and sempai, and felt that it's better for sempai to guide her instead of just training alone.

"Oh yeah. Well... I realized it from the beginning."

After taking a sip of tea, Houki stuttered and asked,

"Doesn't this room have sempai's personal belongings...?"

"Yup, because I'm staying here for the time being."

"WHAT?"

Shocked, Houki couldn't help but step up. I decided to remain silent since I'll trigger a landmine no matter what I say, but...that's not like a man. Guu...

"WH-WHY?"

"Un, because I had to be Ichika-kun's special instructor for a while, so I need to eat and sleep with him to match his characteristics. I also need to observe his usual demeanor."

"Observe..."

Tatenashi-san, are you treating me like a pet?

"If-If that's the case, I want to stay here too!"

Aahh...I knew she would say that...

"Mn—nope."

"Why?"

"Because this is a two person room."

"Uu...!"

That's an amazingly accurate piece of logic.

"Don't worry, don't worry. I won't do anything to Ichika-kun, so relax."

"Sin-Since sempai says so..."

"But Ichika-kun may do something to me."

"!? I-ICHIKA! YOU!"

"WA--! HOL-HOLD ON! I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING YET! TATENASHI-SAN, PLEASE DON'T PROVOKE

HOUKI! SHE'LL REALLY PULL OUT A REAL SWORD ONCE SHE'S ANGRY!"

"Oh my, I was seen through? Sorry, Houki-chan, this onee-san played a little prank. Aha♪"

"Ne-Never mind..."

Seeing her innocent smile, Houki sat down weakly.

Tatenashi-san's enjoying seeing Houki like this.

(This person really knows how to 'grasp people's hearts'.)

Just like that, our controversial stay together began.

Controversy Number 1

"Ichika-kun~"

"Wha—HUH, WAHH!!"

Brushing my teeth just before I slept, I got called back to the room by Tatenashi-san.

And then, lying casually on the bed, Tatenashi-san was casually shaking her leg. No, that's not the problem. The problem's her dressing—a wild attire of underwear with just a shirt over it.

(ACK! I-I CAN SEE IT—!)

Tatenashi-san's firm butt's really nice, and the light purple underwear over it is a little...well, it's showing a lot. I hurriedly went back to the bathroom.

"Huh? What's wrong, Ichika-kun?"

"AN-AND YOU DARE TO SAY WHAT'S GOING ON!? PLEASE WEAR YOUR CLOTHES!"

"I'm wearing them."

"PLEASE WEAR SOME PANTS!!"

"Huh—?"

I could hear thomping footsteps from behind the door. Not good! I'm dead! She's over here!

"...I can't open the door."

"Yeah, I'm pressing down on it."

"Since I can't open the door, I'll break the hinge then."

"Huh?"

KLANG! With a crisp sound, the door fell over.
WAHH!!

"I'll jump~"

Tatenashi-san's weight's pressed down on me.
WAHHH!!

"I'm not heavy, right? My body figure's good too, since I often train myself."

"IS THAT SOMETHING YOU SHOULD BE SAYING? AND THAT'S HEAVY IN THE CURRENT SITUATION —"

"Hit out."

PA! The palm opposite the door landed accurately on the part that's pressing onto my face.

As I lost balance due to this sudden impact, Tatenashi-san used this chance to quickly barge into the bathroom. Right now, I can imagine an event of the floor, me, the door and Tatenashi-san. What is this...

"Okay okay. Admit that you lose and do that highly-rated massage on me."

"Huh?"

"You want to know why I knew about this? Fufufu, because onee-san's information gathering speed is rather fast."

It's nothing, really, I just heard Cecilia-chan brag about it. Tatenashi-san added these words.

(CE-CECILIA! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE!)

Thanks to her, I'm in this state.

To be honest, Tatenashi-san's figure's good, and not just good, but really outstanding. I can even tell through the clothes that she has huge breasts, a water-snake like waist and a perfect-curvy butt.

(DAMN IT! IT'S TOO DANGEROUS TO MASSAGE TATENASHI-SAN NO MATTER HOW I THINK ABOUT THIS!)

To be specific, I'm talking about myself. My sanity and everything else will be in danger, real danger...I have this feeling that it'll be really bad.

"Uu- you're still resisting? If that's the case..."

Tatenashi-san pushed the door aside and fell onto me.

"WHA-WHAT!?"

"Guchy guchi gu~"

"EYAAHH!! ST-STO-STOP IT...UWAAHH!!"

"Okay okay, hurry up and surrender.. Surrender and massage me."

"No, NO WAY! DIDN'T I SAY THAT IT'S...!"

"You don't seem to be scared, so I'm going to increase my strength~"

"WAAAHHH!!!!!! AH, HAHAHA! ST-STO-STOP IT... AH HAHAHA!"

"So are you going to massage me?"

"I-I'LL DO IT! I'LL DO IT! I'LL MASSAGE YOU! AH HAHAHA! ST-STOP IT...!"

Feeling satisfied with my answer, Tatenashi-san finally let go of me.

"Huu—that was a tough one."

"What are you saying? Really..."

"Then hurry up and massage. This onee-san's tired from Student Council work."

"But!"

"Do you want me to bathe myself cleanly?"

"...What's with that answer?"

"Mn. Because I feel that I should answer like that. So?"

"Please wear more clothes. I won't allow any leeway."

"At the bottom? I'm wearing my panties properly—"

"Panties don't count."

"You're so irritating, Ichika-kun~"

"I won't massage you then."

"Huh-you're too much. I'll wearing something similar to pants then."

"Please do."

Looking at Tatenashi-san walk out of the bathroom, she suddenly stopped.

"These aren't panties, so you don't have to be shy."

"Those are panties."

No matter how you call it, anything that looks like panties are panties.

Speaking of which, I still can see it...PLEASE! SERIOUSLY! SPARE ME NOW! I'M ALREADY TRYING MY BEST TO LOOK AWAY.

"Will this do?"

After saying that, she flipped her shirt, and I saw the leggings that exposed the rounded butt. Of course, the lines of the panties were shown as well.

"..."

"Ah, you're looking pervertedly."

"I AM NOT!"

I'm just troubled...really, I am.

"Anyway, I'll leave the massaging to you."

"Okay..."

Tatenashi-san laid down on the bed, and I didn't have any strength to even go against her.

"I-I'll start then."

"Mn, I'll leave it to you then. Make me even more beautiful than I am now."

A massage doesn't change a person's appearance, right ?

Speaking of which, to make her even prettier, isn't the standard too high...

(Ahh...I can feel a nice aroma...)

Unlike Houki and Charl, the sweet and refreshing aroma filled the entire world.

My rapidly beating heart felt like it got wrapped by something soft.

"..."

Really soft.

(Uu, very soft. Speaking of which, it's just the legs, but it's already like this...)

Even so, that's not the feeling of fat. I could feel the firm muscles.

Well...the touch's great. Just touching her alone makes me feel comfortable.

"Oh, hurry up and massage the butt~ my buttocks are sore from sitting down for too long..."

"Uu..."

FORGET ABOUT IT! AT THIS POINT, I'LL JUST ENTER A ZEN PHASE!

Being mentally prepared about this, I reached my hands towards Tatenashi-san's buttocks.

--Soft.

"..."

How-How soft, and ample.

"Ichika-kun."

"Yes."

"You're having a nosebleed."

"...Yes."

Controversy Number 2

"Then, everyone, please prepare for your mid-term exams."

After the 4th period of ordinary subjects (a must study) ended, the classroom was buzzing like usual.

As this class is held according to the language, there's only Japanese in this class. Looking over, I could see black-haired people all over, and it's really unbelievable.

"Orimura-kun, let's go to the cafeteria."

"You should come and eat with us sometimes too~"

"Righty right, the personal pilot group's really sneaky."

Having been surrounded by the girls quickly, I thought I would be forced off to the cafeteria by them... but just when I think that this would happen,

"Excuse me."

Having said those words, Tatenashi-san walked in.

She's holding what looks like a five-layered bento box as she walked here with a smile on her face.

"You should have lunch in the classroom once in a while. It'll be really interesting."

After saying that, she put the five-layered bento on my table and neatly prepared the table.

During this time, she called the other girls over, and soon, 6 people gathered.

(Houki's here. If there's anything happening, I'll get her to save me.)

Just when I was secretly thinking about this, Tatenashi-san opened the bento...ooh!?

"Uwaa...it's super luxurious..."

Someone murmured. Including me, everyone gasped on seeing this super luxurious bento.

Things like Ebi lobsters and scallops are inside. This isn't at a bento's level now.

"How did you make this?"

"Hm? I woke up early."

"I'm not asking about that..."

Recently, being with Tatenashi-san made me realize that as long as I ask her 'How did you do that?', she would answer 'Anyone can do it as long as they work hard.'

But Tatenashi-san's a genius no matter how everyone looks at her, so everyone who she answered would just look lost.

(That's not something you can do by simply imitating...)

"Ichika-kun."

"Huh?"

"Here, ahh-"

My mouth that was wide open got food put into it.

That's a capsicum meat set. The flavoring that's not too heavy and the texture of the meat can be said to be perfect.

But that's not the problem. The girls around me were looking in shock.

After the girls stopped breathing for a second, they showed a serious expression and shouted,

"EEEEEEEHHHHHH~!?"

"ORIMURA-KUN HAS THIS SORT OF RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PREZ...?"

"EVERYTHING'S DEAD! GOD'S DEAD! WE'RE DEAD NOW! ARE WE DEAD NOW!!?"

"PREZ'S SO SNEAKY! SHE'S SO BEAUTIFUL AND FLAWLESS AND HAS A BOYFRIEND!? THIS CAN'T BE FORGIVEN!!"

"ONEE-SAMA!! OUR ONEE-SAMA!!"

As for Houki, whose fingers were strong enough to break the chopsticks, she naturally became a problem.

"Wha-Wha-WHAT ARE YOU DOING!"

"Mn, eating lunch."

"I'm not talking about that..."

"Is it nice?"

"Ah, well, that, yes."

"I want a clearer answer."

"It-It's really good..."

As I said that while looking somewhat shy, Houki finally lost her patience and stood up.

--UWAAH, WHY MUST YOU BRING A SWORD OVER!!?

"Houki-chan?'

"What is it?"

"Here, ah—"

The food was put inside Houki's opened mouth too.

I thought that she would be shocked by this sudden change of situation, yet she quickly returned back to her chair and started chewing carefully. I think she feels that it's rude to eat while standing, sorta.

"How about it? Is it nice?"

"Ye-Yeah. The...flavor really went in. The stewed potato and meat's really nice..."

"Aha! I got praised. This onee-san's really happy."

Everyone here, not just me, but Houki and the other girls, were moved by her smile.

"Does everyone want to try it?"

"Ah, ah."

"Ye-Yes."

"If-if you excuse me."

"Un un♪. This onee-san's really popular."

Smiling, Tatenashi-san fed the other girls as well. Anyway, as it was really good, and since the Student Council President fed her kouhais personally, everyone here had a hard-to-describe expression as we all had lunch.

Controversy Number 3

(Haa...I'm so tired today...)

She's such a carefree person, yet she's so strict in training after school. And it's because she wouldn't scold me that there's more pressure for me to respond.

Training after school ended, and dinner hasn't arrived yet. I'm using the bathroom in my room.

"Huu..."

I washed away the shampoo and rubbed off the water on my hair. I then reached for the towel.

(Hm? That's strange? It's gone...)

GACHUNK!

"Ha~I~ I'm here to wash your back."

"WHAT!?"

The bathroom door suddenly opened, and Tatenashi-san in a swimsuit came in.

Sempai's wearing the school designated P.E. swimsuit, and the monstrous body almost breaks the fabrics of the deep blue cloth, especially the voluptuous breasts that leaves a deep impression on me...WAIT, I'M NAKED!

"Why are you here?"

"I'm going to wash your back."

"DON'T DO THAT, JUST DON'T DO THAT! AN-AND DON'T LOOK HERE!"

"Ara ara, you're really a shy introverted person. Okay, show everything you have to onee-san."

"I DON'T WANT TO! ANYWAY, WHY MUST TWO PEOPLE SQUEEZE INTO SUCH A SMALL BATHROOM?"

"Hm—to stick closer?"

DON'T ANSWER ME BACK LIKE THAT AS IF IT'S A QUESTION!

"PL-PLEASE GET OUT!"

"Okay okay. Don't say that."

I got a light touch on my back.

The soft breasts could be felt from behind the swimsuit , making me really anxious.

"NOOOOOOOOOOOO!!! PLEASE GET OUT! I'LL REALLY GET ANGRY!"

"Bu—bu—Ichika-kun's really petty."

"THIS ISN'T ABOUT PETTINESS...NOARR!?"

Her arms reached over from behind my back skillfully, and the finger seemed to be drawing something on my chest as it climbed up my chest.

The slight trembling sent me a signal of danger, and my voice got louder.

"TATENASHI-SAN! GET O—"

"I'll go once I rub your back."

"..."

It feels like resistance is futile.

"I got it...whatever you want..."

"Aha♪-Ichika-kun's really magnanimous~"

Who's the one who forced me to this state...

I let my head and shoulders slump heavily and let her rub my back in this cramped bathroom.

"Is there any part that's itchy~?"

"None."

"Che."

This person actually made such a sound.

The sponge that was filled with bathing foam (that's probably Tatenashi-san's personal item) was rubbed onto my back with suitable force.

Letting others rub my back...how long has it been?

Maybe since a long time ago. I haven't experienced this ever since Chifuyu-nee washed my back when I was young.

(Uun...)

I decided not to think about Chifuyu-nee, because if I do, I'll remember that we used to bath together, and then my thoughts will head into a place I shouldn't be thinking.

"Wah—Ichika-kun, your body's rather good. You didn't just train, did you? Even the muscles that can be used are well-developed."

"Tha-Thanks for your compliment."

"I heard that you used to practice kendo. How about now?"

"Nope. I haven't been doing it for a long time, and I got crushed badly by Houki when I faced off against her the last time."

"Houki-chan, huh? She's amazing too. I can tell that she's really hardworking."

"I'm the same kind of person too." Tatenashi-san added.

"Are you lying?"

"Huh, why? This onee-san's a hardworking person, you know? I'm not talented."

"You're lying again..."

"Muu, kids who don't believe their elders should be punished...like this!"

The hand that's covered with bubbles tickles my abdomen, and it's stronger and more destructive than ever.

"AHAHAHAHA!! STO-STOP IT...HIII!!"

"Fufufu, you can't doubt onee-san's words. You must believe me, understand?"

"I GOT IT, I GOT IT, I GOT IT! SO-SO PLE...ASE STOP ...HAHAHA!!!"

"Okay, no problems. Onee-san's going out first. I'm done with your back too."

Tatenashi-san casually moved her body away from me . After washing away the bubbles on her, she opened the door.

"Ichika-kun."

"...What?"

"Your butt's not bad, you know?"

Ufufu. Tatenashi-san laughed as she left the room.

I can tell without looking that she must be very carefree now.

"..."

Anyway, to calm myself, I spurted a lot of water from the showerhead.

"COLD!!"

Of course it is.

"Ahh~..."

The usual few girls showed wry smiles as they saw me collapse on the table.

Right now, it's dinner time at the dorm, but it seems like I don't have any appetite left.

During these few days, my life's been completely messed up by Tatenashi-san, and I'm really tired.

"It's been tough on you, Ichika."

"Oh...Charl..."

"Do you want some tea? If you can't eat, at least you should drink something."

"Oh...thank you..."

I looked up, just a sip would do.

Everyone's eating their own dinner, and the dishes seem to be quite good.

(But I have no appetite...)

I'm not joking. I'll really die if this life continues. Most likely because of fatigue.

"So where's that woman?"

Laura asked that in a really angry manner. She's been feeling angry ever since she lost that day.

One of the reasons she's so frustrated is that she can't sneak into my room occasionally now. Well, I'm thankful to Tatenashi-san with regards to that, but...un.

(I'm really bothered that Laura's feeling unhappy...)

I pondered with my emptied mind.

The tea Charl passed to me was just warm enough, and I calmed down.

"Ichika, I'm asking where is that woman."

"Hm? She went out saying that she had Student Council work."

"Ye-Yeah, there're a lot documents~"

The slow and laid back tone made me turn around. As expected, it's Nohohon-san.

Oh, you, this Student Council secretary. Hurry up and help your Prez.

"I say~ I'll just increase their workload if I stay there~ I came out so as not to disturb them~"

"And you dare to say that..."

Speaking of which, is it really good for the Student Council to have such members?

As for Nohohon-san, she likes ochazuke, and there's a large piece of salmon fillet on it. Tha-That's really luxurious...

"Hey hey hey? What tea do you take when you eat ochazuke? Coarse tea? Green tea or relaxing red tea? I take Oolong tea~"

Sitting down on the empty seat, she suddenly asked me. She mixed the food in the bowl with chopsticks, and it really looked rather corroded.

"I think it should be here~"

"..Over where?"

"I'm adding raw egg in."

Kapak—Woah! She really added it!

"Spin spin spin spin~"

The stickiness of the rice increased, and it looked even more messed up! Nohohon-san happily smiled.

...On the other hand, I've lost all my appetite already.

"I'm tucking in! *Gobble* *gobble* *gobble*..."

"WAA, STOP MAKING NOISES WHEN YOU EAT!"

"Huh--? That's impossible~ Making sounds when you eat is what a gourmand should do~"

"THAT'S FOR SOBA NOODLES!"

"I'll try it then~ *ciu* *ciu* *ciu*..."

Hu...it got slightly quieter...no, wait, what were we talking about?

"Ahem...Ichika-san?"

"Hm? What is it, Cecilia? Why did you become so formal out of a sudden?"

"If you find that it's tough living in that room, it can't be helped then. I should help others with a bushi's heart[5B 7]; How about you come over to my room?"

...Ahh, are you talking about the room where the bed took up nearly all the place?

"Hold on, Cecilia! Wait! Ichika, come over to my room! I have poker cards."

"Trying to bait me with poker cards? I'm not a primary school kid!"

"Then how about Kompeito?"[5B 8]

"Are you intending to kidnap some kindergarten kids!?"

And she lowered the standard for some reason. Rin, I really don't understand you.

"What? Are beans better?"

"ARE YOU FEEDING THE PIGEONS!?"

...Oh well, I don't want to talk anymore. The more I talk, the more tired I'll get.

"I'm going back to my room..."

With heavy feelings, I got up from my seat and left the cafeteria for my room.

I should sleep a little before Tatenashi-san comes back. Thinking about that, I placed my hand on the door handle.

"Welcome back. Do you want dinner, a bath, or do, you, want, me?"

Two seconds after I opened the door, I saw sempai.

Losing all my strength, I collapsed with my knees first to the floor.

Chapter 3: Clear Melody of Cinderella's Heel

The school anniversary's finally here.

As the school anniversary's not opened to everyone, there won't be any opening fireworks, but the students' excitement was enough to fight against enemies, and everyone's feeling really pumped up.

"You're lying, right? You'll be greeted by that Orimura-kun if you go to class one?"

"And he will be wearing a tuxedo too?"

"And you can take photos with him if you win! A two-people photo! A two-people photo! We must go!"

And, in front of the 'Service Café' of class 1-1, we've been working our backs out since early in the morning.

Even so, if I have to put it, I'm the only one who's really busy because I'm too popular and lack a body double. The other people are all enjoying it as per normal .

"Welcome♪. Please walk here, ojou-sama."

Charl in the maid outfit looked really happy as she had been smiling since morning.

(Is it because I said that it suits her? Even so, she's been feeling really happy.)

On a side note, the attendants outside (the cosplayers) are me, Charl, Cecilia, and unexpectedly, Houki and Laura.

(Even if Laura had to take part since she proposed this, Houki unexpectedly agreed...)

That really surprised me. But she would sulk when I told her to invite the customers in, so it didn't look like she would fit in anyway. She would look especially frustrated when the customers asked me when I would be serving them...is it because she lacks calcium?

(But, well...)

Seeing the girls in maid outfits running in and out, my heart fluttered for some reason.

Dan used to say 'maid outfit, school swimsuit and bloomers! No guy will be unmoved by these three outfit!' or something like that...un?

Leaving that aside, the remaining classmates are divided into two groups. One's the cooking staff in the kitchen, and the other is the miscellaneous stuff.

The miscellaneous stuff group's busy with the refilling of the food that's used up, the clearing of the tables, and controlling the crowds who're queuing up on the corridor, which would be the toughest for them.

"Sorry, but I've been waiting for two hours."

"Please relax, there won't be any problem. We'll continue operations until the festival ends."

They're busy dealing with the customers who are complaining about all sorts of things (well, it seems that they're all complaining about waiting for too long).

(Would it really be alright to have a longer queue than in the morning...?)

Thinking about this, I used the gap between the attendants to look outside the classroom.

"Ah, there's a signboard for the last in line."

"Huh? What kind of games do they have?"

"I heard that there's janken, memory match and dart shooting. It seemed that they designed these choices for the people who aren't good with certain games."

"Huh-can't we go in yet?"

The crowd outside seem to flood the entire first year corridor, and there's people, people, and more people everywhere. I do think that the maids in our class would be suffering trying to serve so many people.

"Ah, it's Orimura-kun!"

(Uh oh, they found me.)

As I thought that, several of my classmates who were organizing the crowd rushed to me and pushed me back into the classroom.

"Ara—I told you not to come outside the classroom—!"

"You'll make things even more chaotic!"

"The fun must only be enjoyed at the end."

U-Un? What does the last sentence mean?

"""Okay, hurry up and head back!!!"""

Now that they said that, I couldn't say anything back, and can only serve the customers now.

"Hey, the butler over there, bring me to my seat!"

(This voice is—)

A familiar and slightly crude voice. I turned around, and as expected, it's Rin.

Though it's Rin, she...

"What are you doing...?"

Rin, who's dressed in a cheongsam[5C 1], is just standing there.

It seemed that only one piece of cloth is used, and the slits are rather daring. There's a picture of a dragon on the red cloth, and there's gold lace and delicate embroidery. Well...

"Sh-Sh-Shut up! Our class' doing a Chinese teahouse!"

"I see, so it's a teahouse?"

"I'm supposed to be the waitress, but because your class is just beside us, we don't have any customers at all!
"

My second childhood friend is fuming.

"Hm? That's strange? Rin, your hairstyle's different from usual. What are the bun-bun things on your hair?"

"Chignons."

"Tha-That's right. It really suits you."

"Uu...we-well, I think it suits me since I'm Chinese..."

Why must she be so shy?

"An-Anyway! Help me find a seat!"

"Ye-Ye— Then, ojou-sama, please walk here."

"O-Ojou-sama...?"[5C 2]

"This is how I should be calling you now."

"Fu-Fuun! Anyway, it can't be helped if you've been told to do this...yup, can't be helped."

Why must she repeat the same thing twice? I harbored this simple question as I brought Rin to an empty table.

On a side note, the furniture was already past a school anniversary's level. Cecilia prepared them all herself.

The insistence she had on the quality of the tables and chairs was especially shocking. They looked so classy, I had to wonder how much one set was worth.

The tea accessories were all intricately chosen, and the classmates in charge of these seemed to be trying their best not to let their hands tremble.

"Then, may I know what would your order be, ojou-sama?"

"Le-Let me see..."

Perhaps the high class of the furniture made her uneasy, as Rin twisted about twice before sitting properly and looking through the menu.

On a side note, we can't let the ojou-samas hold onto the menus on their own, so I or the maids will have to hold it for them to read...I do feel that it's really scary to start getting used to such things.

"What's this 'Reward a Butler Set Meal'?"

...

"Do you want to try our shop's cakes?"

"Hey hey, are you trying to change the topic?"

"There's no such thing, I can assure you that."

"...Don't say that, it's disgusting."

"Why are you calling me disgusting!? I'm working now!"

"Then I'll have a 'Reward a Butler Set Meal'."

...

"Ojou-sama, would you like a 'Reward a Maid Set Meal'?"

"Ichika, this meal has something to do with you, right?"

GYUU!!!

"You really like to make jokes, ojou-sama."

"Sin-Since you called me ojou-sama, obey my words...I want a 'Reward a Butler Set Meal'."

I couldn't resist Rin, who's staring up and me, for the third time, and can only indicate that I understood unwillingly.

Even so, she seemed to be rather embarrassed about it. Is it because of the name of the dish? You're too naive,

Rin, there're a lot of dishes with even more awkward sounding names like 'Lakeside Nightingale Cry Set Meal' , 'Deep Forest Love Set Meal' and so on...uu, just thinking about it is making me uneasy.

"A 'Reward a Butler Set Meal'? Then please hold on."

Bowing politely, I left the ojou-sama, Rin.

On a side note, I don't have to head to the kitchen when I took the order, as the voice will be passed through the brooch-shaped mic when I repeated the order. Well, as for the insistence...as expected of the girls.

"Okay, I'll leave it to you then."

Returning to the bar counter, I took the 'Reward a Butler Set Meal'. The contents of the set meal includes iced tea and Pocky. It's cheap, and it only costs 300 yen.

The customers' smiles are treasures, but even then, I need to hold back the reluctant feeling to serve the customers as I walked back to the table with the cheongsam girl waiting there.

"Sorry to keep you waiting, ojou-sama."

"Don't mind."

What's with that answer? She really intends to be like a real ojou-sama, but it really feels weird.

"Then, if you excuse me."

"Huh?"

I sat down in front of Rin, and both of us are now facing each other at the 2 people table. One's dressed in a tuxedo while the other one's in a cheongsam...what's with this scene?

"Wh-Why are you sitting down...well, I guess, it-it doesn't really matter."

"Please allow me to explain."

"Oh, oh—I'll leave it to you then."

...

"WHAAAT!! I GIVE UP I GIVE UP! It's alright if I talk to Rin as if it's normal?"

"Gu, you're right...since your tone's so weird, Ichika, I'll forgive you."

YOUR TONE'S THE ONE THAT'S WEIRD!

"So what kind of set meal is this? It seems to be just snacks and drinks."

"...You can feed."

"What?"

"...I'm saying, that you can feed the butler with this set. .."

Rin blinked, and her face immediately went red.

"Wh-Wha-What-What is this set meal...or rather, asking me to fork money out to feed dessert to you..."

"Can't cancel the order...really, that's why I don't want it."

"But, well...tha-that's right...since I ordered it...uu."

"What's wrong, Rin? It's not mandatory, so you don't need to feed me if you don't want to. I'll just leave if that's the case."

"I-I'll feed! I'll feed you! Service properly once you take the money! Really!"

"I got it, I got it. No need to be so angry."

"We-Well, that...say ahh..."

"Ahh—"

The crisp sound of the biscuit breaking could be heard from my mouth. The Pocky and the sundae glass were iced together, and so the chocolate bits won't melt immediately even after biting it. It feels like I was eating a protective layer, but it soon melted a few seconds later, and the sweetness that spread was great.

"I-I fed you, so you need to feed me—"

"There's no such service in this shop, ojou-sama."

Dressed in a maid outfit, Houki interrupted the stuttering Rin. Well, she really looks scary.

"Is-Is that so? I see."

"..."

"Erm, Houki? It's okay, isn't it? Speaking of which, aren't you taking orders from the third table?"

"I got it!"

Snorting coldly, Houki turned around.

"Why's she so angry...right?"

"I-I don't know."

For some reason, Rin blushed as she ate the pocky. The way she lowered her head like a squirrel's really cute.

"Rin."

"Hm?"

"You're rather cute."

"Guu—!!"

Rin spat out the iced tea in her mouth, and then coughed non-stop.

"H-Hey, are you alright?"

"Wh-Wha-What...What do you mean I'm alright?"

"Nothing, it's just that the way you ate the Pocky's really cute."

"Cu-Cute...?"

"Yeah, like a squirrel."

"...Like a squirrel—YOU-YOU IDIOT!"

BAM! I got a karate chop on the head. Gua, it really hurts.

"WHAT ARE YOU DOING?"

"THAT SHOULD BE MY LINE!"

With the sound of the table and chairs colliding, we stood up forcefully.

At this moment, a fan appeared between Rin and I before opening, and the words written on it are 'Rasetsu'[5C 3]...erm, this must be...

"Okay okay, stop creating a commotion here. The other customers will be frightened, you know?"

"What? Se-Sempai? What's with that out—"

I'm shocked that she's wearing a maid outfit. When did she borrow it? That clothing type's completely the same as our class' outfit.

"Tatenashi."

"Heh?"

"I told you to call me by my name."

"Ta-Tatenashi-sempai."

"Good boy."

She kept the fan back in her direction, and folded it back with a snap. The refined movement sounded just like some comedic storyteller[5C 4] or a Japanese dance choreographer.

"Then I'll have some tea too."

"Aren't you serving the customers..."

"Nope."

"Then why are you dressed like that...oh well, forget that I asked."

Haa...just when I sighed for the umpteenth time, an extremely noisy girl rushed in.

"Hello, this is the News Club interrupting. I'm here to interview the butler Orimura!"

It's the news group ace Mayuzumi Kaoruko-san. We're rather familiar with each other since she often came here to take photos of me.

"Ah, Kaoruko-chan! Yohoo!"

"Wa! Ta-chan! That maid outfit suits you too! Ah, since we met, let me take a photo of you and Orimura-kun."

After saying that, she started pressing the shutter quickly, and Tatenashi-sempai already raised the 'YAY♪' victory pose...why did this happen? Are the second year sempais full of enthusiastic people?

"...I'm going back."

"What's wrong, Rin? Are you going back?"

"I still have my own class to attend to."

"I see. Oh, yeah, I might go to your side to take a look."

"Un, well, I'll serve you if you're a guest."

"Okay."

As I exchanged words with Rin, the photography situation changed as drastically as the clouds in the autumn sky.

"It's not good to not include girls in this."

"Didn't you take a photo of me?"

"Ta-chan's too overbearing, so it can't work. Ah, since it's a rare sight, we might as well get the other girls over. How about that?"

"Not a bad idea. I'll take care of the shop at this time."

"Okay, let's do it then! I'm going to take the photos. All the maids, please line up here."

(Why is it that everyone's ignoring my wishes...)

Just like that, sempai started taking photos.

First up, Cecilia.

"Ichika-san, you need to smile."

"Lik-Like this?"

"You're still looking stiff. This service won't do."

"Speaking of which, you're rather happy, Cecilia."

"Oh my, am I? Ufufufu."

"Hey, hey! Don't hook up my arm like that!"

"What's the problem? It's just a small movement."

(The girls around us are glaring at me. Maybe it's my imagination...)

Next up, Laura.

"But, well. Our height difference's rather significant."

"Mn? Oh, that's right."

"...That can do..."

"Huh?"

"You-You can...carry me if you want to..."

"Huh, that..."

"Th-This is for the photo! Do you understand!?"

"Cal-Calm down."

"I-I'm calm!"

(That's definitely a lie)

Third person, Charl.

"If-If you don't mind me asking you, Ichika, how's my outfit? Does it look weird for me to wear it?"

"No problem. It really suits you."

"Re-Really? More than the tuxedo?"

"A maid outfit suits you better, and the skirt's really cute too."

"C-Cute..."

"Yup."

"I-I see. So I'm cute...ehehe♪"

(I do feel that she's smiling a lot more radiantly than before...)

Fourth person, Houki.

"..."

"What's wrong? Hurry up and take the photo."

"I want to avoid ta-taking a photo in this outfit, but..."

"What about it? Aren't I in a similar outfit?"

"It's not the same! Completely different! Basically, you —"

"Okay okay, I got it. The shop's busy, so hurry up and take a shot."

"St-Sto-Stop holding onto my hand!"

"Sto-Stop moving!"

"Sh-Shut up, shut up!"

After some turmoil, all the maid and butler pair shots were finally taken.

Mayuzumi-san looked delighted as she looked through the preview photos on the digital camera.

"Ya~ the girls of class 1 are really sporty. I'm really happy as a photographer."

"Kaoruko-chan, I'll leave it to you at the Student Council."

"Of course, leave it to this Mayuzumi Kaoruko!"

Mayuzumi-san patted her chest as she said that. Why is it that even though she's in an Arts Club, her mannerisms are like those of the Sports Club...

"Oh yeah, Ichika-kun, I'll be helping out here for the time being. Why don't you check out the other stalls in school?"

"Huh? Can I?"

"Yup, you can. This is Onee-san's special service."

"Th-Thanks, but my classmates will scold me if I disappear..."

"No problem! I'll help you deal with it and cover up."

(Hmm—it's true that Tatenashi-san's really popular, so I guess the customers won't be unhappy, right?)

After thinking through this, I accepted Tatenashi-san's goodwill.

"I'll leave it to you for the time being then."

"Okay, be careful."

I took off my butler outfit and arrived on the corridor. It's still crowded, but with Tatenashi-san's help, the flow of the crowd felt a lot smoother than before.

"Ah, it's Orimura-kun!"

"Huh, where are you going to? Rest?"

"Yup, sort of."

I answered the girls as I headed to the corridor.

"May I bother you for a while?"

"What?"

Someone suddenly called me on the platform of the stairs.

"Sorry, but I'm from this industry."

The lady in suit quickly passed me the namecard.

"Erm...IS armament development company 'Mitsurugi' representative, Makigami Ayako...san?"

She's really a beauty, and the flowing long black hair really suits her.

She's been smiling ever since she called me. Well, she does have the 'Professional' look.

"Yes, we'd like to have Orimura-kun use our company's equipment."

(Ahh...that again...)

To be honest, there're a lot of companies who were willing to supply [Byakushiki] with equipment, and I spent more than half the time of my summer vacation facing these people.

Basically, as the only guy in the world who can pilot an IS, if my [Byakushiki] is willing to accept some company's equipment, the commercial effect would be more than what I can imagine.

Up till now, the [Kuratokugi-ken] that developed [Byakushiki] hadn't developed any more equipment after that, so invitations were flying in from all companies all over the world like snowflakes.

(Even so, it can't be helped that [Byakushiki] wasn't willing.)

The expansion range of the secondary armaments is decided on the equalizers in each suit, but it seems that the IS core also has its own favorites and would decide on whether it's willing to accept the equipment.

[Byakushiki] hates any ranged weapons and shields, and it even refuses fighting weapons other than [Yukihira Niigata].

But I used a ranged weapon when I fought against Laura, so as a result, the second phase created the [Setsura] that can shoot, fight and defend...

"Ah—erm, sorry, but I can't make the decision... anyway, please ask the school for permission."

"Don't say that."

Unlike her appearance in a suit, Makigami-san's manner of interaction was rather intrusive. She grabbed me on the arm and made me unable to leave.

"How about this additional armor or thruster? Also, if you decide to use it now, we'll even add a leg blade!"

"No, well, I don't really need that...besides, there's someone waiting for me. I'm really sorry, but I have to leave."

"Ah!"

While Makigami-san's taking out the product catalogue, I shook her hand off and dashed off.

(Ahh—that took up more time than I thought.)

Thinking about that, I rushed to the meet-up point.

"Fu, fu, fu..."

Right in front of the main entrance to IS Academy, a guy's holding onto a ticket with one hand and smiling.

He's Ichika's friend, Gotanda Dan.

"Finally, finally, finally! The land of the girls, IS Academy...HERE I COOOMMMEEEE!!!"

This started 3 days ago.

Dan was at Ichika's friend Mitarashi Kazuma's house practicing the bass.

"Oh yeah, has Ichika gotten a girlfriend yet?"

"Ahh—he said that he isn't interested in girls. Such dreamy words"

"He's still saying those things..."

Kazuma's adjusting the sound box beside Dan, who's tweaking the bass.

These two didn't join a band. They're just members of the 'Want to learn how to play musical instruments group' (private). There are only 2 members.

"Oh yeah, Dan, what's your class doing this year for the school anniversary?"

"Our class? The rugby team would probably play the ' Squashed by Muscles' game."

"What in the world is that..."

"What about you? Aren't there any instruments you want to perform?"

"Can I even perform at this level?"

"Ah--, that's true~ even though we've been training for a year, it doesn't feel like we've gotten any better."

"Yup. We haven't improved at all. It'll be bad if we can't think of a way."

After ending their conversation in a tone that clearly indicated that they had no intention of dealing with the problem, both of them laughed.

"But Ichika really has it good, isn't it? IS Academy's famous for having so many beautiful girls, right? I want to study there too."

"Yeah. Ichika even said that he's not interested in girls. How stupid."

"He's a complete moron!"

WAHAHAHAHA! After laughing a few times, both of them went silent.

They're now imagining how it would be like to date a bishoujo.

""..""

Pinpirori~ pirori~♪

"Hm? Oh, got a call...oh! It's from Ichika!"

Dan picked up the ringing phone and put it at his ear.

"Yo."

"Yo, Ichika, how've you been? What's up? Got something on?"

"You said that you wanted to come to IS Academy, right?"

"I did, I did. What? You got some tickets there?"

"Yup."

He froze. Two seconds later, Dan reacted as if he was going to jump out.

"AR-ARE-ARE YOU SERIOUS!!?"

"It's true. I only have one ticket, so I guess if you're bored, you might want to come over."

"I'LL GO!"

He immediately answered. There's no need for hesitation.

"I see. I'll send it to you through mail. Remember to bring it with you, or else you can't get in."

"Right, I got it!"

Dan energetically answered, and his tone immediately became earnest.

"Well, Ichika, you're really a great guy! It's nice to have a friend like you."

"What's with you? That's disgusting..."

"Anyway, that's the case! I'll leave it to you then!"

"Okay, I got it, I got it. See you next time."

After hanging up the phone, Dan again shouted at the ceiling,

"
YEEEEEEEEAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHHHHHH
!!!"

And thus, Dan arrived at IS Academy today. It's been over ten minutes since the arranged time, but he didn't really mind.

(Ahh, I can see lots of girls here...the standard's really high-really.)

Even though Dan's wearing casual clothes that were just chosen, other than that, he's just an ordinary teenage guy standing there, and it seems that he's getting quite some attention, as everyone's starting to gossip about him.

"Is that guy someone's boyfriend?"

"I don't know. He looks okay."

"Huh—I find that Orimura-kun's better."

Dan noticed the girls discussing intensely about something, and his heart started to beat wildly.

(Wow, everyone's looking at me...is-is-is-is this the sign of a new development!?)

"The guy over there."

"Yes?"

Suddenly, Dan got shocked after being called, and he straightened his back.

Turning around, he saw a bespectacled and meticulous-looking Nohotoke Utsuho standing down there with a file in her hand.

"Who invited you? May I check your ticket?"

"O-Okay."

Dan frantically passed over the ticket that was squashed flat.

"The one who gave it was...ara? Orimura-kun?"

"The-Then, you know him?"

"I don't think there is any student in this school who doesn't know him. Okay, let me return this to you."

(Th-This girl's really pretty...no, cute! I've got to find some way to know her more...something I can talk about, something...)

"We-Well!"

"? What is it?"

"The-The weather's great today!"

"Yeah."

After the conversation ended, Dan felt depressed that he wasn't interesting enough. Utsuho looked at him weirdly and then left.

(U-Uu, I'm so useless...I'm so useless...)

If there's a bass guitar with him, Dan would be performing a sad tune.

Feeling like he had half a foot in the coffin, he just waited for Ichika to arrive.

"Oh, I see him. HEY, DAN!!"

"Oh..."

Seeing Dan's liveless response, I was shocked.

"Wh-What's wrong?"

"It's nothing...I'm really uninteresting..."

"I see. So that's how it is."

"WHAT DO YOU MEAN THAT'S HOW IT IS!? YOU BASTARD!!"

"Hold on hold on, don't cause a ruckus. You'll be chased out."

Having been hit hard, Dan finally recovered as he now follows me from behind.

"Let's go over to where Rin is. She'll be shocked."

"Ah, you're talking about Rin? How's she?"

"Way better than good."

"Speaking of which, Ichika."

"Hm?"

"What's with that dress-up?"

...

"Rin's class is doing a teahouse."

"Hey, don't change the topic."

"My-My stuff's not important!"

"Oh well. I'll leave it as that then."

Fufun, I brought the slightly unmoved and humming Dan into the school.

"How about we check out where Rin is?"

"Mn? Well, there's no need to go there. Since it's a rare chance, I want to walk around."

"Okay, I haven't gone there either. Let's go."

Dan and I walk out side by side.

"Ah, it's Orimura-kun! Yahoo~"

"I'll go to your shop later!"

"Huh, taking photos of Orimura-kun in a butler outfit! Success♪"

No matter where I went, girls were talking to me, and I had to wave my hand and answer back. It's really tedious .

As I continued to repeat these actions, Dan could be heard murmuring from beside me.

"You're really popular..."

"No, well, this is like the situation with the Axolotl[5C 5]."

"Is that so? Even if that's the case, I'm really jealous of you. Hey, let's switch."

"I would if we could switch. But try your best, since the IS training's really tough."

"Hahaha! If I can get surrounded by girls, I won't be afraid even if I'm in the midst of fire and water!"

"You might even die in IS practicals."

"...You need to treasure your life more."

"Don't say it like you're telling me to care for the world !"

"Nope, I don't want to die!"

"Same here, okay?"

"That's true. Things don't always go as we want."

Both of us sighed in unison with regards to this inexplicable situation, and we swayed our way into the arts classroom.

"Art's an explosion!"

...I have a bad feeling about this.

"So the Arts Club will be presenting a bomb defuse game!"

"Ah, it's Orimura-kun!"

"And his male friend!"

"Now now, here's the bomb defuse game. Ready, start!
"

After saying that, a girl with a group leader armband pushed the bomb to me. Arts Club, is this alright? You let such a person become the President.

"Erm...first, let's make some sensor-like thing fail."

I check the wiring and slip the pliers between the gap.

Then, I cut the wire linking to the impact sensor.

"Good. This means that it doesn't matter even if it's rewired now. Next, it's..."

"...Ichika."

"What?"

"You learn about this too?"

"Yeah."

Speaking of which, I remember that Laura taught me a lot of things the first time I defused a bomb.

As expected of the soldier and commander of a Special Ops Squad, it seems that Laura's specialty is to neutralize dangerous objects.

"...I think I would rather study at a normal high school.
"

"? Really?"

"Yeah..."

I don't know the reason, but it seems that Dan gave up on studying in IS Academy.

Well it doesn't matter anyway. There's no need to talk about anything if he can't even activate an IS.

"Ohh! As expected of Orimura-kun, you're now in the final phase!"

The final phase—that's to 'Completely Neutralize the Bomb'.

Basically, it's the scene in those movies when I have to choose between 'blue or red'.

Right now, this game has only two wires left, red or blue. This will be over once I cut one of the wires, but it'll explode if I mess up.

"Dan, which one do you think it is?"

"You-You're asking me?"

"Well, it's a game anyway. Just choose a color you like.
"

"Uu, oh, oh...blue...red..."

Hm? Speaking of blue, I remembered Cecilia's [Blue Tears]

If red...Houki's [Akatsubaki]?

"Dan."

"Wha-What's up?"

"Which kind do you prefer? Blond or black?"

"Blond!"

"Okay, got it."

Bak! I cut the blue wire.

At the next moment, BEEEEEEPPP!! The alarm rang.

"Ah, I failed."

"Y-Yo-You bastard! Why did you cut the blue wire out of a sudden?"

"Well, you said that you prefer blond."

"WHAT HAS THAT GOT TO DO WITH BLUE!?"

"Well, [Blue Tears]."

"THAT'S RIDICULOUS!"

I comforted the screaming Dan as I took the consolation prize, a candy.

They're giving candy even at high school...

Is this alright? Arts Club, is this really alright?

"Ahh—I'm sweating now. Let's find a place to drink, Ichika."

"Hm? Oh, you're right. Let's go to Rin's class. How about that?"

"Oh yeah, you said that their class was doing a tea house. Alright, let's go take a look."

Things got easier after we decided on that. We climbed up the stairs and walked into class 1-2.

"Welcome~"

"GUHA! Ri-Rin, you, what's this...what are you doing?
"

"What? Why's Dan here!?"

"Th-The cheongsam really doesn't suit you. Anyway, why—GUU!!?"

Dan got interrupted forcefully since Rin threw the tray
.

Uwaa...it went all the way into the face...

"G-GO-GO BACK!"

"WHAT'S WITH YOU! IT HURTS! Ahh—you're so different from that cute woman I just met."

"What? Who are you talking about?"

"Fu fu fu...not telling you."

"Ichika, it's this idiot's fault."

"DON'T CALL ME AN IDIOT!"

"You're one in the first place."

"WHY ARE YOU AGREEING WITH HER!!"

This trio of middle school diehard friends started squabbling, and the outcome was that we got lectured by the second years who couldn't take it.

Anyway, we found a seat and opened the menu.

"So?"

"So what?"

"How's it going between you and Rin? Tell me."

"What? What are you saying? Anyway, who did you just meet?"

"Oh, there's a cute woman."

"A cute woman? Not a cute girl?"

"Yup, she seems to be older than us."

"Heh—"

"You don't know that person?"

"Who?"

Sometimes, I really don't understand what this guy's talking about.

"Take this, water!"

"Wah! What are you doing, Rin? Just put it down nicely."

"That's right, that's right."

"You're too noisy, Dan! I'll punch you away!"

"...Don't move. I saw on TV before. You're a cadet or something, right? I'll die."

"That's right, so you have to respect me more."

"Hahaha. You're really funny."

"I wasn't joking. Really..."

Just when the three of us were chatting away, my phone rang.

"Oh, hello?"

"Where are you right now, Ichika? The customers are grumbling, asking where you went. It's getting busy now , so hurry up and come back."

Charl sounded really anxious, something that doesn't fit her character, and I had to go back.

"Sorry, I'll be going back now. I'll be in the classroom next door, so I'll be there soon."

"Mn, I'll leave it to you then."

After ending the conversation, I told Dan and Rin that I'm going back.

"Work properly, butler."

"That's right."

"Shut up."

But well, to put it this way, I remembered the times in middle school when the three of us were often playing together.

My thoughts ended there, and I went back to class 1.

"Ahh, Ichika, it's good that you're here. Hurry up and play games at table 3, and also, serve the food here to table 4."

Immediately after coming back, I received the tray Charl passed me.

"I-I understand. Speaking of which, where's Tatenashi-san?"

"She said that she had things to do at the Student Council, and then ran off somewhere."

How, how irresponsible...

"Anyway, the shop's really busy now. Work fast!"

"I-I got it!"

I moved around busily.

"Sorry to keep you waiting, ojou-sama."

"Kya! It's Orimura-kun~!"

"A game! Let's play a game!"

"I ordered the reward set meal, so hurry up and sit down, hurry!"

I check out the other people, and found that everyone's rather popular.

Most notably, Laura, who normally felt like she's hard to approach, became very popular after she dressed up as a maid, and she got called around to play games everywhere.

(Speaking of which, this is severe overwork to the body...)

While working, I felt that it got hotter, so I rolled up the sleeves of the shirt.

"Hey, Ichika, don't change the design of the clothes randomly."

Holding a tray, Houki said that to me. Her normal clothes make it hard to imagine that she would wear a maid outfit, and like Charl, her popularity's second only to Laura.

"Houki. It's alright that I roll up my sleeves, right?"

"Nope, we borrowed these clothes, so wear them properly."

"What...Houki, don't tell me that you like me in this get-up?"

"Wha-What are you saying! I-I'm just telling you to work seriously!"

"I was joking."

"Wha-What...?"

"What is it?"

"Fu, humph! It's nothing!"

With the skirt flying slightly, Houki walked back to the kitchen...why must she be so angry?

(Okay, time to do my best!)

After that, I moved through the tables, and after an hour, I finally got out of the situation where I got tugged around.

"Good work, Ichika-kun."

"Ah, Takatsuki-san, it's been tough on you too."

The reliable person in our class—Takatsuki Shizune-san seemed to be busy with a lot of things.

"You can rest for a while. We need to tidy up the shop a bit, so it'll be quite some time."

"Can I?"

"An hour shouldn't be a problem. Since there's a rare chance, why don't you follow the girls to some stall?"

Just when I was about to accept her goodwill, my arm got pulled over...wha-what?

"Then, Ichika-san, please come along with me."

Turning around, I saw Cecilia.

Seeing this, Charl cried out, a rare feat for her,

"AHHH! CECILIA'S SO SLY~ I want to go too, Ichika."

"Wait, if that's the case, I'm going too!"

Interrupting us quickly was Houki, and her eyes looked a bit scary.

"Let's go, Ichika."

Laura already got ready to move.

(Uu...it'll be troublesome if a lot of us move at the same time...ooh, that's right!)

I suddenly had a brainwave.

"Everyone can go with me in shifts. 10 minutes per person."

"In other words..."

"With Ichika..."

"Two-Two of us, alone..."

"...That's not a bad idea."

Cecilia, Charl, Houki and Laura kept murmuring 'un un', nodding away as if they're crushing garlic.

I couldn't hear what they're muttering about, but it's good that they can understand my thinking.

"Then, who fi—"

"Rock, paper, scissors!"

All four of them decided to choose the order through janken. Wow, that was quick!

"Rock![5C 6]"

Three people chose paper, while one chose scissors.

"Ehehe...♪"

Charl won the first go, and her happy look showed on her face as she raised the scissors hand that changed into a sign of victory.

"The Cooking Club?"

"Yup, their main theme this time is traditional cuisine. I think it's a rare chance, and I want to learn how to make Japanese dishes."

"You really can cook, Charl."

She treated me to a few bentos, and the light seasoning that brought out the taste of the ingredients was to my liking.

If this Charl can make Japanese cuisines like that, I have a duty to try it.

"Uu, mn, I'll cook for you next time."

"Okay, thanks."

We continued to talk as we entered the cooking classroom the cooking class uses.

"Ohh...that's really..."

To put it simply, they're selling snacks here, but there's a lot of variety.

The food arranged on the tray includes potato and stew meat, kanto cooking, salad, stew, BBQ meat and so on. There're a lot of dishes, and they all look really delicious, so delicious that I couldn't help but swallow my saliva.

"Ah, don't tell me that's potato stewed meat?"

"Yup. It's said to be a dish women need to know."

"I see...why is that?"

"There seems to be a custom that women who can make the potato stewed meat best will be able to get married, but I really don't understand why."

"Ma-Married...!? I-I see.."

Perhaps surprised by my words, Charl was shocked as she continued to stare at the potato stewed meat.

Just when I was thinking if she really wanted to eat it, someone who looked like the President of the Cooking Club came to us.

"Ooh, it's Orimura-kun! And the famous Dunois-kun who used to dress in guy's clothing."

"Ah, hello."

"He-Hello."

"What's up? Are you two dating? A secret date between the butler and the maid? Even so, this isn't just ordinary minced meat, but mixed minced meat. I'm kidding, I'm just kidding."[5C 7]

Ohh! I feel that I can be good friends with this person!

On hearing her say what I was thinking, my heart soared as if I was playing a triple jump.

"You're thinking of something stupid again, aren't you, Ichika?"

Why did I get seen through again?

"Okay okay, try it first! I can treat it as a free sample. The condition is that I get to take a photo~ and you must vote for us, okay?"

Wa, it suddenly felt like improper bribing.

"No, there's no need. We'll pay."

As expected of Charl, she's upright.

"Then, erm, can you get me a potato stewed meat?"

"No problems. Enjoy~"

The President of the Cooking Club pulled a potato stewed meat from a large plate that was kept warm at a constant temperature, and handed it over to Charl.

I ordered the same thing, and I quickly tried it.

"Ohh, this is really..."

"It's nice, Ichika."

"Mn, really nice."

The seasoning was done just right. It doesn't feel greasy at all, 'Braised to Perfection'[5C 8], like how I always hear it.

Mn, I really want a bowl of rice.

"But this dish's really nice."

"This dish was cooked through a pressure cooker. This can not only cut short the cooking time, it will also affect the flavor."

Agreeing with me that this dish is nice, Charl pricked her ears and listened to the President of the Cooking Club.

"Pressure cooker...is-is there anything else?

"Fufufu, the rest is a secret. If you want to know, join our club!"

"Cooking Club...Ic-Ichika, would you be happy if my food's good?"

"Hm? Of course I would. It's important to be able to eat good food."

Eating food. Well, it must be a form a salvation—I remember someone said that before.

"Is-Is that so? I see...ehehe."

For some reason, Charl smiled radiantly as she finished off the potato stewed meat.

(Anyway, this stewed meat is nice. I better finish it off too.)

Just like that, my rest time with Charl ended.

"You're too slow!"

Standing on the corridor and waiting for me with her arms folded was the maid with the eyepatch, Laura.

"Your sense of time is too weak!"

"Okay okay, don't say that. We'll use up the rest time like that, you know?"

"Tha-That'll be bad..."

"I remember you wanted to go to the Tea Club, right? Okay, let's go."

"Do-Don't hold my hand!"

Laura immediately shook her hand off after saying that, and her face blushed for some reason.

"Hm? Oh, sorry."

"No, it's not that. Well...I guess...if-if you want to do that..."

"? How about we move fast?"

"..."

DOK! The side of my abdomen took a karate chop... why's that?

"Hello and welcome...ooh! Orimura-kun! Can I take a photo with you?"

Why is it that everyone asks for a photo with me everytime they see me? I really don't understand.

Anyway, it's not like they'll take anything interesting...

"The Tea Club's opening a Green Tea experience session. Please head to this tearoom."

"Ohh, tatami[5C 9]. You really put in a lot of effort."

It was the same as with the Cooking Club. Every room had proper facilities.

As expected of IS Academy, where so many people wanted to get in.

"Then, please sit here."

Following Laura's instructions, I took off my shoes and sat on the tatami.

"But it's really unbelievable. A butler and a maid sitting on tatami and drinking green tea."

"Fu-fuun, don't you feel that the outfit was too girlish?
"

"Do I? You looked really awkward when Chifuyu-nee laughed at you crazily, I guess?"

"Sh-Shut up! The Instructor's another case altogether!"

I recalled Chifuyu-nee saying that she wanted to come over to take a look, and just burst out laughing on seeing Laura in a maid outfit, happily enjoying that scene.

At that time, Laura looked like a recruit who got a water gun as armaments and yet got deployed to the frontlines.

...She seemed like she'll get angry if I say it out, so I decided to remain silent.

"We don't demand that you adhere to the tea tasting customs, so please enjoy."

"Ah, yes."

The Club President, who's dressed in a yukata, smiled as she passed the sweets to Laura and me.

I took one and ate it. The sweet white bean paste quickly spread on the tongue.

"This is really good."

"Uu..."

Laura didn't eat the sweet, but looked like she was in a dilemma.

"What's wrong?"

"We-Well, how do I eat it?"

Laura got a little rabbit that's made from white bean paste, and the face looks cute.

The rabbit seemed to be staring back at Laura, and I don't know if it's saying to her 'Please eat me' or 'Please let me go'.

Seeing Laura's reaction, I guess it's the former.

"Laura."

"Wha-What is it?"

"You can't take the green tea if you don't eat it."

"U-Uu...!"

After I prompted her, Laura decided to eat the rabbit-shaped sweet in one go.

...Ahh, she doesn't want to see the half-eaten rabbit, right?

"...Muu, Japanese sweets are really good."

What happened to that struggle? Laura looked really happy as she continued to eat the sweet.

"Here."

And then, the President served tea in front of Laura and me.

"We accept your tea. Itadakimasu[5C 10]."

After bowing, we picked up the tea bowls and put it to our mouths.

The unique bitterness of the green tea spread out, washing away the sweetness left in the tea.

The throat was cleared immediately, smoother than ever, and after drinking that, Laura and I sighed lightly.

"Your tea's really perfect."

Laura and I ended off with the common lines in a tea ceremony, and bowed again.

We should be looking at the teabowls, but the Tea Club here isn't that fussy, as the main point of emphasis is to 'Taste the Green Tea'.

"Come back when you have time."

The Tea Club President watched Laura and I leave the room.

"Not bad."

"Mn, not bad. Japanese culture's really interesting."

"Since you find it interesting, why don't you wear some Japanese clothes, Laura?"

"Jap-Japanese clothes? Speaking of which, I've never wore them before."

I tried to imagine Laura in a wafuku[5C 11].

For some reason, I feel that the flowing silver hair and the wafuku would suit her.

"Do-Do you want to try...?"

"If I get a chance, I'll definitely want to try it."

"Is-Is that so?"

Laura immediately showed a rare radiant smile.

After realizing her reaction, she suddenly turned her back on me.

"Ah, alright, if I have a chance."

"Oh."

With such a conversation, my resttime with Laura ended.

"Speaking of which, Cecilia, I remember you know how to play the violin?"

"Mn, and a little of the piano."

"As expected of Cecilia. It would be great if I could learn an instrument too. I only learnt kendo."

"I-If that's the case!"

Cecilia tugged at my arm and pointed at the classroom that had the sign **Wind Instrument Society Experience Stall**.

"Wh-Why don't we go try it out now? How about it? Well, I guess, it's not like I can't teach you, you know?"

"Huh? Is it still not too late to learn? I don't even know how to read a score."

"For music, having love for it is all that's important."

Must have love? That's a nice line.

"The-Then, let's go in!"

"H-Hey! Don't pull me that hard!"

After opening the door, I saw the President of the Wind Instrument Club lift her head up.

She was pressing down on the piston of the instrument to check its condition for lubricating it.

"Well..."

I felt that it was hard to talk.

Just when I thought this, the Club President who just noticed us lifted her head up.

"Ohh! Ohh! The sixth guest is finally here! Here, here, please come this way! Huh, isn't this Orimura-kun? Can I take a photo?"

"Ah? Oh well, you may do so."

"That's great!"

The phone let out a ringing sound.

Facing the smiling Wind Instrument Club President who was smiling and holding onto the camera, Cecilia coughed dryly to interrupt her.

"Nnh! Which instruments can we try out here?"

"Hm? You can try out all of these here. Personally, I recommend the French horn. It feels great when I blow it. The sound fluctuates."

"Fluc-Fluctuates?"

"Then, Orimura-kun, let's get started."

Immediately after saying that, the Club President passed me the French horn she was tuning.

After receiving it, I found that it was heavier what I thought, and got a bit surprised.

"How do I hold this?"

"You must put your right finger here, the thumb should be put here, and the left hand should reach for this exit."

"Is-Is that so?"

It felt weird, hard to carry. Is this gimmick something like this?

"Then, try blowing hard into it."

As the President prompted me, I blew into it as hard as I could.

"FUU--! FUU--!!"

...There's no sound at all.

"Ah, well, your mouth has to touch it and blow."

The President pressed her lips inwards and demonstrated it to me.

"Li-Like this?"

"Yup. And you have to exert a certain amount of strength right into the middle."

"I-I'll try."

Gufuu~

"Ohh! The sound came out!"

"Oh? You're rather talented. Orimura-kun, would you like to join?"

"No, I'm not really good with this. How about you, Cecilia? Would you like to join?"

"M-Me?"

"Don't you know how to play instruments?"

"I only know how to play stringed instruments. I've never played wind instruments before."

"Really? I find that you're really suited to play the flute . There's that grandeur noblewoman vibe from you."

"Grandeur noblewoman..."

For some reason, Cecilia muttered blankly as she continued to repeat these words.

"Oh, try it."

After saying that, I passed the French Horn in my hand to her.

"Huh? Th-Tha-That's, is that, well..."

"?"

"...-direct, indirect kiss..."

"Huh? What did you just say?"

"No, nothing! Nothing at all!"

For some reason, Cecilia started panicking as she waved her hands wildly, and then stared intently at the French horn.

She looked extremely serious, and I had to swallow my saliva.

"Th-Then, I'm blowing..."

"Ah, we must change the mouthpiece. Here, please."

"Ahh..."

"Hm?"

"..."

For some reason, Cecilia glared at the President who casually decided to change the mouthpiece.

Wha-What's wrong? Shouldn't you be thanking her?

"Here, please."

"No need!"

After saying that, Cecilia passed the French horn back to the President.

"Really, how stupid...!"

And she even got angry for some reason.

Just like that, my rest time with the third person ended as well.

"And I was actually the last one...ku, that was unexpected."

"What are you muttering over there for? Where are we going?"

"Uu, mn, yeah...where's a good place—"

"Speaking of which, what's the Kendo Club doing? It's a rare chance, so let's take a look."

"Wha-What?"

"Huh, it's...ah, is it there?"

"Ho-Hold on! If I go to the Kendo Club—"

"Okay, okay, here we go."

"Do-Don't grab my hand! I'll go there on my own!"

I pulled Houki, who was resisting forcefully for some reason, and headed to the classroom where the kendo stall set up shop.

"Welcome."

It's a room with black cloth draping all over. A mysterious person fully covered in armor awaits in the darkness.

"Wah!"

"Oh my, so it's Orimura-kun and the phantom member Shinonono-kun."

"Is-Is that the Prez...? Wha-What's with that get up...?"

"Mn, at first, it was just a kendo experience stall, right? But nobody would vote, right? So I just decided to cast divinations?"

Why must they be in questions...?

"But there's nobody around at all? No customers here? I couldn't think of anything, so I full on full kendo armor to try it out?"

Something's definitely wrong.

"Then, let me tell your fortunes. Ah, sit down, sit down ."

Houki and I were asked to sit down on the chairs, and we both stared at the Kendo Club President.

She was holding some hanafuda[5C 12] in her hand...

"Well..."

"Hm? What is it?"

"Why Hanafufa...? Don't you use tarot cards or something for divination?"

"I prefer hanafuda divinations, you know?"

"Well, Prez? I've never heard of that before..."

"Hm? I just named it, you know?"

It-It seems that she's really a lost cause.

"Okay~ here we begin, alright? I'll take your fortune in love, okay?"

Don't we have a choice?

As I repeated these words in my heart, the President said assuredly as she started her divination.

"Mn...Orimura-kun's the 'Rain Four Lights[5C 13] So, do you have any difficulty with girls?"

"Well, even if you ask me..."

Sort of, that's about right.

"A lot of things happened to you today as well, right? I really pity you, you know?"

"Wha..."

"Then, I'll take the love fortune for the phantom member Shinonono-kun, okay?"

"Pl-Please?"

Why didn't the Club President lash out at Houki for her low attendance?

Unfortunately, the face was covered, so I couldn't see her expression.

"Huuh,,,Shinonono-kun, you got the 'Tsukimi-shu'[5C 14]. So, you're looking forward to activities, right? Your lucky point is the dojo?"

"No, well...I'll try my best to show up..."

"Really? I'm really happy to hear you say that~"

Ignoring the last bit of the conversation, it seemed that Houki's divination was done.

"Ah, that's right. I'll see your fate through divination, okay?"

"Divination of fate?"

"Is-Is that so? That's good!"

Houki got worked up suddenly as she popped out.

The President calmed Houki down and explained,

"Erm, can you two hold each other's hands together? At each other? Mn mn."

Houki and I reached our right hands out and put them at each other.

"Then, can you maintain this position for 10 seconds?"

"Ah?"

"Ca-Can this really tell what's going to happen?"

Houki asked the President in a slightly nervous tone.

"Who knows?"

"Who knows...?"

"Well, you see? You'll feel irritated if you put your hands together with someone you don't like for 10 seconds, right? So you don't hate each other? Okay, divination's over."

Wow, that was really slipshod.

"Is-Is that so..."

Hm? Why do I feel that Houki's really happy?

Is there something worth being happy about? I don't understand at all.

"Ah, rest time's over. Houki, let's go back to the classroom."

"Ye-Yeah."

...

"Houki?"

"Wha-What?"

"Can you let go of my hand now?"

"Tha-That's right!"

Houki finally realized this after I reminded her, and the hand that was holding tightly onto mine quickly backed away.

"Good bye then. Thank you for today."

"Yes, is it tough? Ah, Orimura-kun, can I take a photo?
"

"Ah? Oh well, go ahead."

"Yes, thank you!"

Another photo got taken. For some reason, it seems I got used to it.

"Okay, let's go back then."

"...Compatible, compatible..."

"Hey! Hello, Houki?"

"Wh-Wha-What?"

"Nothing, well, let's go back to the classroom."

"Y-Yeah, that's true."

Houki put forward her right hand and right leg as she walked back to the classroom with arms and legs in sync[5C 15]

Class 1-1's stall is still as busy as ever, and I returned back to the scene where there's a lot of people squeezing through.

(But since everyone's working hard, I wouldn't feel so irritated.)

To be able to work hard with someone, that's something I'll be happy with.

(Okay, time to work hard!)

"*KLANG KLANG KLANG!* Tatenashi-san appeared!
"

"..."

The person who abandoned her duty appeared!

Command Escape, escape, escape

"But you can't run away!"

"WHAT! Don't get in my way!"

"Well well, don't say that. Speaking of which, Orimura-kun, since I came to your classroom to help, please help the Student Council with an event."

"You're not saying that as a question?"

"Nope, I'm saying a definitive sentence."

"What about my opinion..."

"Can't I make any decisions for you? I'm the Student Council President."

DON'T IMITATE AIDA MI*SUO'S MANNER OF SPEAKING![5C 16]

"...What do I have to help with..."

"Ara, not resisting now?"

"I know it's useless to resist."

"Oh my. Do you really think you understand what onee-san's thinking? Long way to go, first-year-kun."

She pointed her finger on my nosetip. Now what do I have to do...

"Ahaha, it's really fun to make fun of Ichika-kun."

"And, the activity?"

"Mn, don't be angry. It's a play."

"A play...?"

Contrary to what I thought, this feels normal.

"A play where the audience gets to take part."

"What?"

A play where the audience gets to take part...well, what's that?

"Anyway, follow onee-san. Yup, I decided."

Pointing at me with the fan, Tatenashi-san proudly declared.

"Well—sempai. We'll be troubled if you take Ichika away..."

Ohh, Charl! That's right, keep talking!

"Charlotte-chan can come along too."

"Huuh?"

"Onee-san can let you wear pretty dresses, you know~?"

"Dre-Dress..."

Do your best, Charl! I know girls look forward to wearing dresses, but do your best for me!

"Th-Then, well...just a little."

Charl got captured...why did that happen?

"Mn~ so honest and cute! Then, Houki-chan, Cecilia-chan and Laura-chan, come over as well."

""""What?""""

The three girls who pricked their ears to eavesdrop answered with a tone of surprise.

"I'll let everyone wear dresses."

"If-If that's the case..."

"Oh well, a trip's..."

"Mn, mn, it can't be helped..."

Houki, Cecilia and Laura were captured too.

"Erm, if I may ask, what are we acting as?"

"Fufufu."

Pak! Tatenashi-san opened her fan, and there's the word 'Hakugeki'[5C 17].

"Cinderella!"

"Ichika-kun, are you done yet?"

"..."

"I'm opening the door."

"DON'T SAY THAT AFTER YOU OPENED THE DOOR!"

"What, aren't you all dressed up already? Onee-san's really disappointed."

"...What?"

Right now, I'm in the fourth arena changing room, where I normally change my IS suit.

The costume...well, it's actually a prince's outfit...

"Here, the crown."

"Haa..."

"Why, you don't look too happy. Do you want to act as Cinderella?"

"NO!"

This person, really...she really likes to create lots of troubles, and I've really gotten a migraine over it.

"Then it's time to act."

I secretly peeked out. The stage on the fourth arena's really glamorous. Of course, it's full of people, and I could hear cheering from inside the changing room.

"Then, as for the play later, I haven't even read anything like a script yet."

"No problem. I'll be the one hosting, so just perform as I say. Ah, please come up with your own lines."

Is it really okay...I really have to ask.

With an unspeakable anxiety, I moved towards the stage.

"Then, let's begin!"

The buzzer sounded, and the lights reined in.

"A long long time ago, in a certain land, there was a girl named Cinderella."

Very good, that's a normal beginning. Speaking of which, who'll be acting as Cinderella?

Thinking about this, I headed towards the stage.

"No, that's no longer a name. Having snuck out of many parties, they defeated many enemies no matter how much dust they got. The title most suited for them... is 'Cinderella'[5C 18]!"

...Huh?

"Tonight, the bloodthirsty Cinderellas will again take action. The girls will aim for the neighboring country's military secrets that are hidden in the prince's crown, and they shall dance on this death arena called the stage!"

"WAI, WHAT!?"

"GOT YOU!"

With a sudden cry, Rin appeared in a silvery white Cinderella dress.

"WAH?"

"HAND IT OVER!"

Rin glared at me, who dodged in reflex, and threw the Chinese flying dagger— Y-YO-YOU IDIOT!!!

"WHAT WOULD HA-HAPPEN IF I DIED!?"

"I'LL KILL YOU IN A WAY THAT YOU WON'T DIE!!
"

"I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT THAT MEANS AT ALL!"

No, how can I die here!

I flipped the teaset on the table and used the tray to block the flying knife.

"KILL!!!"

Rin kicked away the tray that had the flying dart on it.. .WAAH, YOU IDIOT! I'LL BE ABLE TO SEE YOUR PANTIES!!

(Ah, she put on some slacks?)

NOW'S NOT THE TIME TO RELAX!

...Speaking of which, RIN'S ABOUT TO KICK ME WITH THE HEEL OF THE SHOE!

"YOU'RE WEARING GLASS SHOES, RIGHT!?"

"NO PROBLEM! IT SHOULD BE HARDENED GLASS !"

"YOU IDDIIIOOOTTT!! THAT'S DANGEROUS!!"

Just when Rin and I were fighting, I saw a red light moving.

(What's that? Why does it feel like it's moving towards me--)

At the next moment, the object that's near my face got hit.

"WAH!?"

(A sniper? That means, Cecilia!)

As it seemed that she put the silencer on, I couldn't hear the gunshot or see the muzzle flash from the triggered rifle.

It seems that she's using some powerful rapid-fire skill as she again snipes at my head.

"I-I-I'LL DIE!! I'LL DEFINITELY DIE!!!"

I kept my body down to cover myself...whose act is it now!?

(Ku...he got away.)

As the metallic sound of the bullet shell could be heard , Cecilia's eyes left the scope.

Following the principle of the sniper, to 'Shoot and Move', she headed off to the next sniping point.

(I must win this time!)

Only the female actors know the secret prize, and that is 'The girl who gets the crown from Ichika will get the right to stay with him'.

Even though everyone was stunned when they first heard that,

"The Student Council President has the authority to do that."

On hearing Tatenashi's words, everyone got motivated .

(Live in the same room as Ichika-san, live in same room as Ichika-san...)

Already thinking about it, Cecilia smiled.

(It's a good thing that I can run to the stage from here, and I can use all other equipment other than IS equipment.)

She intended to snipe the crown and grab it to win it like that.

(That's right! Those who win at the times they need to win are the real winners!)

The Cinderella dress on Cecilia dressed. Immediately after reaching the second point, she took her rifle out and got ready.

(Got you!)

Pew pew! The gunshots that were muzzled with the silencer rang again.

(I should be safe here, right...?)

Several seconds later, I, who was hiding behind the background, had to show myself after Cecilia started sniping me.

On a side note, as the protagonist, I can only dodge around, so every time I returned to the stage, the crowd audience would applaud me and cheer for me.

"Ha-Haha...thank you."

I bowed politely to the crowd in appreciation, but Cecilia didn't let this chance go as she sniped me.

I immediately ran away onto the stage that's ridiculously wide.

"Ack, no place to run?"

So her sniping was to lure me here as a trap.

"Ichika, hurry up and get down!"

"?"

Armed with a riot shield, Charl suddenly appeared in front of me.

Like everyone else, she was dressed in a Cinderella dress.

However, why are blonds so suited for this kind of dress? Is it a culture difference?

"Ch-Charl, you saved me..."

KLING KLANG! The sharp sounds of the bullets being blocked could be heard.

"That's enough. Hurry up and run!"

"Oh, okay! Thanks!"

"Ah, we-well, wait a minute!"

"Wha-What is it?"

"The-Then, I'll be happy if you leave the crown behind. .."

"Uu, un? Well, okay."

I won't be sniped if I don't have this on my head. Let's do this then.

Thinking about this, I put my hand on the crown, but Tatenashi-san stopped me.

"To the prince, the country's everything. If he loses the important secrets in the crown, the thought of guilt will turn into an electric shock."

"WHAT!?"

I was stunned, but my hand was already reaching for my head subconsciously and took the crown off.

"GYYYYYAAAAHHH!!!"

BAK BAK BAK!! An unexpected sound resounded, and the electricity flowed through my body.

The current passed through my body, and it felt really hot.

"Th-Thi-This..."

My clothes were burned and tattered, even giving off smoke.

"WHAT THE HELL IS THIS!?"

"Oh my, what's going on? Does the ouji-sama[5C 19] worry about his country that much? But we can only look at him. What's going on?"

"YOU DON'T HAVE TO REPEAT THAT TWICE!"

Anyway, I couldn't take a second electric shock, and thus quickly put the crown back on.

Speaking of which...things just got really bad. Tatenashi-san really looked excited. What am I supposed to do now?

"So-Sorry Charl, but you just saw it."

"Huh? Then what? I'll be really troubled!"

"Even if you say that...sorry!"

"Ah! I-Ichika!"

I scampered away like an escaping rabbit.

However, the black-haired and silver-haired Cinderellas appeared in front of me.

"Hold it right there, Ichika!"

"I'll take the crown!"

Houki's wielding a Japanese sword, while Laura's holding a combat knife in each hand...UWAAAHHH!!

"DA-DAN-DANGER!!"

At the last minute, I dodged their attacks from the side and rolled on the floor.

"DON'T GET IN MY WAY. LAURA!"

"I SHOULD BE THE ONE SAYING THAT, RIGHT? SEEMS LIKE I HAVE TO ELIMINATE YOU FIRST!"

"Interesting...BRING IT ON!"

Both of them started fighting for some reason.

Now, I have Rin Cecilia and Charl behind me...Hmm? What? There's an earthquake...

"Now, everyone present can take part in this! Everyone , please work hard for the prince's crown!"

"WHAAATT!!?"

The real reason for the earthquake was that more than ten Cinderellas came rushing over, and the numbers continued to increase...I feel like I saw this in a movie before...haha...

"ORIMURA-KUN, SURRENDER QUIETLY!"

"WALK WITH ME TO HAPPINESS! OUJI-SAMA!"

"HAND...IT OVVVEEERRR!!!"

I continued to think of how to get away from the Cinderellas who were rushing to me as I continued to run through the stage sets.

"I FOUND YOU, ICHIKA!"

NOT GOOD! IT'S HOUKI!

"HAND ME THAT CROWN! IF THAT...that happens.."

"So-So what will happen?"

"UU! ANYWAY, JUST HAND IT OVER TO ME! I'LL SLICE YOU IF YOU REFUSE!"

WHAT KIND OF WORDS ARE THOSE!? THAT'S REALLY SCARY! SOMEBODY SAVE ME!

"Please head this way."

"Huh?"

My foot got grabbed and I rolled and fell below the stage sets.

"We're here."

"Wha-What....tha-thanks..."

I was led by this person out of the stage set and into the changing room—

This is the side room I was using, and my uniform's still here.

Speaking of which, as it's too dark, I don't know who brought me here.

As I looked at her again, I realize that it's Makagami Ayako-san. She's still smiling.

"Huh, huh? Why's Makigami-san..."

"Yes, I want to use this chance to get [Byakushiki]."

"Wh-What?"

She's still smiling, and she hasn't changed her expression at all.

"Alright, hand it over, brat."

"Erm...well, you're kidding, right?"

"Why would I joke around with you, brat? You infuriate me."

Though the tone's completely different, she's still smiling at me.

I couldn't respond to her sudden change in attitude, and my abdomen suddenly got kicked. The hard impact smashed me into the cupboard.

"Ah-ahh, you bastard! The face can't change back. My face."

"Hoo, hoo! Wh-Who are you..."

"Ahh? Me? I'm a mysterious beauty who disguised as a company worker. Well, are you happy now?"

She again stepped on my legs.

...The pain that came clearly told me that 'She's the enemy'. Why am I still an idiot who loves peace now?

"Ku...[Byakushiki]!"

As the situation was bad, I summoned my IS.

I used up a lot more energy than usual as it was an emergency summoning that splits the clothes up, but there's no time to mind about the technical details, because she's an enemy with an unknown identity.

"I was waiting for you to summon it."

Makigami-san finally lost her smile...hold it. The long narrow eyes of this woman in front of me seemed to be distorted because of the evil presence. She is like a snake every time she stretched her long tongue out.

"Because it's finally time for this to come up!"

"?"

A sharp 'claw' appeared from behind the woman, ripping the suit in the process. The spider legs like thing had ominous matching colors of yellow and black, each having a blade-like tip.

"Take this!"

The 8-legged armor deployed the tips of the legs, revealing cannons.

"Damn it!"

I tried my best to burst the thrusters on my legs at the floor, exerting the maximum output.

[Byakushiki] and I used the reaction force of the [PIC] to do an emergency dodge.

"Oh, not bad."

Before knocking into the ceiling, I activated the [Setsura] of [Byakushiki]. It'll be faster to attack with the internal weapon [Setsura] than [Yukihira Niigata].

"Who are you?"

Flying backwards to dodge, the woman dodged the beam claw, and continued,

"Ah? Don't you know? I'm a member of an evil organization!"

"Stop messing—"

"I'm not messing around, damned brat! I'm a member of the secret organization **Phantom Task**. You must call me Autumn-sama, understand?"

This woman—Autumn completely deployed her IS, and her delicate control of her [PIC] dodged my attacks and shot live rounds at me.

"Eat this!"

Taking the concentrated fire of the 8 cannons, I jumped up and dodged the cannons that were coming in from left and right.

At the same time, I wielded the [Yukihira Niigata] in my right hand and swung it down.

(Got you!)

"You're too naive!"

The opponent's 8 armored legs grabbed the blade of the [Yukihira Niggata] completely.

"Damn it!"

The blade was held on tight. No matter how much I tried, I still couldn't budge.

At this moment, a machine gun formed in Autumn's hand, and she shot at me.

"Guu!"

A few shots pierced through my armor, and the tremendous impact spread to my body.

My body has the protection of [Absolute Defense], but the pain didn't disappear just like that.

(It'll be bad if this keeps up!)

Thinking about this, I put my weapon down for the time being, shot the thrusters on the wings backwards and flipped backwards.

Dodging the bullet, I kicked the enemy's gun, and then grabbed the [Yukihira Niigata] back from the enemy's armor.

"Hahaha! Not bad, kid! You can actually pull some moves in front of this [Arachne]!"

"Shut up!"

There are a lot of obstacles in the changing room, but I used the delicate skills I learnt from Tatenashi-san to dodge the attacks and close in on the enemy.

Learning these skills really helped me a lot.

"UWWOOH!!"

"Ha! That was close, close, close, close...wow!"

I started to lose grasp on Autumn's movements, and I don't know how many times I was attacked.

It seemed that each armored leg that extend from the back could deploy [PIC], and the [Arachne]'s mobility was more nimble and complicated than any IS I've seen.

The movement was just like that of a spider.

(Uu, I can only predict her movements and use [Ignition Boost]!)

I used the surroundings to control my flight, dodged the bullets that were raining down on me, and waited for the chance to attack.

(Calm down. Just calm down. I'll just attack when it's time.)

"Oh yeah. Let me say this as well. We're the organization that kidnapped you during the second IS Mondo Grosso! This reunion sure is touching, hahaha!"

"--!!"

Her words really enraged me.

--If that's the case, that's the case. So...

"I'LL PAY YOU BACK FOR THAT TIME!"

"Kuku, you're still just a brat, using a frontal assault like that...huh!"

I noticed that she shot some rope-like things from her fingers at me.

The energy lump expanded in front of me, forming a huge web.

"Ku! This—!!"

If this is energy, I'll use [Setsura] to slash it.

But even though I intended to, the web extended all over me, and several seconds later, held me down.

"Hahaha! That was effortless! That's what happens when you underestimate a spider's web!"

Showing a cold smile, Autumn approached me, who's struggling, and took out a 4 legged equipment.

"Hm, well, it's party time!"

With the sound of activation, the four-legged thing that was about 40cm wide expanded.

"Are you going to say goodbye? KYAHAHAHA!!"

"Wha...?"

The enemy put the equipment on me. The four legs touched my chest and shrank as it stuck onto my body.

"To your IS, of course."

"WHAT?"

At this moment, energy that felt like electricity ran through my body.

"GYAAAAAAHHHHH!!!!!"

A sharp pain that felt like it was going to rip through my entire body attacked me.

While in tremendous pain, the fact that Autumn was mocking me with her smile angered me all the more. Unexpectedly, I could still remain focused even under such pain. That was really unbelievable.

"Then, playtime's over."

The electricity vanished, and the lock disappeared. At the same time, I was released from the web.

(Now—!)

I try my best to punch her, but—

"You missed, brat! You don't have any IS!"

I got hit on the abdomen and got sent flying to the locker.

This pain made me realize that [Byakushiki] was gone.

"Wh-What's going on...[Byakushiki]! Hey!"

I was only left with the complete IS suit, as [Byakushiki]'s armor and armaments were all gone.

"Hehe, your important IS is right here."

"Wha-What?"

Autumn was holding a crystal in her hand....that's undoubtedly [Byakushiki]'s core. It was radiating even

brighter than an ordinary core, proof that the core had advanced to the [Second Shift].

"The equipment just now was called the [Remover]! It's a secret weapon that can forcefully remove an IS, you know? You're really lucky to be able to see it while alive!"

She stepped on me twice.

Unable to get up due to the continuous pain, I glared at Autumn, and she stepped hard onto my head.

"Give it...back..."

"Ah? I can't hear you?"

"GIVE IT BACK, YOU BASTARD! STOP MESSING AROUND!"

Finally able to move, I leaped into action and attacked her back.

"I said that it's too late!"

This time, I got kicked on the side, and my back slammed into the wall, making me unable to breathe for the time being.

What's with her? Does she like to kick? I really want to say that 'This level of legs isn't much', I have a lot of beautiful legs around me.

(Ha-Haha...I really don't know, but people would be like this once they go crazy?)

I gave myself a self-mocking smile...nothing changed at all, nothing. I'm still as useless as ever.

However—

(However—I CAN'T FORGIVE THAT!)

I grabbed the leg Autumn kicked me over with, and closed in onto her body. At the same time, I reached out my arm for the core in her right hand.

"It's useless!"

The armor that hit my back sent me flying to the wall... damn it, damn it, damn it!

"Well brat, you're useless now. So let me kill you!"

Showing a sly smile, Autumn said that to me.

"Oh my, I'll be really troubled. I'm mindful of Ichika-kun you know?"

A delighted sound echoed in my ears, and that didn't match the current atmosphere. Looking over, I saw Tatenashi-san standing at the door, holding the fan in her hand like usual.

"Where did you appear from? All the systems here were locked down....well, I guess I'll just have to kill you! "

"Tatenashi-san!"

Autumn turned around, and the 8-legged armor attacked Tatenashi-san.

"I'm the student leader of this school, so I have to do this."

"Ah? What nonsense are you spouting?"

At this moment, Autumn's armor pierced through Tatenashi-san's body.

Chapter 4: Mysterious Lady

"Tatenashi-san! TATENASHI-SAN...YOU DID THAT TO HER!?"

"..."

Even though she got pierced by the armored leg, Tatenashi looked undisturbed. On a closer look, the spot the Arachne stabbed through didn't even leave a single bit of blood.

"What's with you...? I didn't feel like I hit you...?"

"Ufufu."

Tatenashi smiled, and at the next moment, her body collapsed.

Splash, the thing that turned into Tatenashi spread out .

"You bastard...is that water?"

"Good answer. It's called a water fake."

The casual voice rang from behind Autumn.

Tatenashi swung her spear at the shocked Autumn, who turned around her head in shock.

"Ku...!"

"Oh my? Did I cut you too thinly? That IS of yours is really mobile."

"What are you?"

"My name's Sarashiki Tatenashi, and my IS is the [Mysterious Lady]. You've got to remember that."

Tatenashi smiled. The IS on her is one Ichika never saw before.

The armor's narrow and small.

However, the parts that didn't have the armor form a transparent liquid-like thing. It felt just like a water veil.

The lady with a unique appearance that's surrounded in mist had crystal shaped items floating on both left and right sides, and they were really eye-catching.

The objects called Aqua Crystals activated the screens of water that covered Tatenashi like a huge windbreaker. [5D 1]

"Heh! I'll kill you now!"

"Ufufu. That's really some classic line from a villain, which means I'll definitely win."

After saying that, Tatenashi used the spear to attack.

In contrast to Autumn and her [Arachne] IS that managed to attack continuously with 8 legs and 2 hands, Tatenashi just used a spear to block them all.

"Damn you! Don't get cocky, kid!"

Drawing two daggers from her waist, Autumn turned all her armored legs on the back into firing mode to fight in long range.

"That painless attack of yours isn't going to break through my water shield."

The water veil blocked the live rounds of attacks that rained in like a storm, nullifying them.

The bullets immediately lost their speed on entering the water veil, and stopped as they were captured by the water.

"Isn't that just ordinary water?"

"Oh my, aren't you the alert one? This water's controlled by the nanomachines in the IS. Amazing, isn't it?"

Even though Tatenashi was saying that, she didn't stop moving her arms.

She used the spear to skillfully flick away the two knives in Autumn's hand, and even used her legs when necessary as she completely nullified the opponent's attacks.

"Who in the world are you!?"

"I won't introduce myself a second time. It's too troublesome."

"SHUT UP!!"

Seeing her attacks getting blocked perfectly, Autumn started to feel anxious.

Tatenashi completely ignored her reaction as she rushed the enemy's attack with precision and a cold face.

"Oh yeah. Do you know? The Student Council President in this academy is the strongest."

"HOW WOULD I KNOW!?"

Autumn threw the knife in her left hand and jumped forward to close her distance with Tatenashi.

She grasped the moment Tatenashi deflected the knife and kicked the spear up.

"Oh my."

"TAKE THIS!"

Four of Autumn's 8 armored legs were in shooting mode, and the rest were in close combat mode as a fierce attack was launched.

"It's really tough to handle so many legs."

"Hahaha! I'll see how long you can keep up that wretched mouth of yours!? The strongest? Don't make me laugh, kid!"

As what Tatenashi said, the 8 armored legs gradually held down Tatenashi.

Even though she had armor protection, the enemy's attack started to touch the IS' main body directly.

"Ta-Tatenashi-san!"

"Just rest there, Ichika-kun. Leave this to onee-san, so just pray and make a wish for me."

"Humph, kid! Weren't you being so calm just now?"

Autumn finally broke through the bronze wall-like defense as she used the armored leg to kick Tatenashi.

At the same time, she shot out spider web from both hands to rob Tatenashi of her mobility.

"Haa...haa...you're really hard to handle, kid!"

"Yup, seems like I can't move now."

"This is the end...!"

KLANG! The 8 legs got ready and slowly closed in on Tatenashi.

But Tatenashi didn't look anxious or scared.

"Hey, don't you find this room hot?"

"Ah?"

"I don't mean the temperature, but the human touch temperature."

"What are you talking about...?"

"The discomfort level is decided by humidity—*hey, don't you find this room extremely hot?*

"!"

Completely shocked, Autumn saw that the entire room was full of mist, and her body was covered with this thick mist.

"Yep, I wanted to see that look on your face. The look when you know you got outwitted."

Tatenashi smiled like a Goddess, but this expression should be more like a Deathscythe that clearly indicates the intention to kill.

"[Mysterious Lady]...'The Lady in the Mist', this machine can control water freely. Like I just said, they're

nanomachines that can use the energy of the IS to control water, right?"

"Da-Damn it—"

"Too late."

BAM! Tatenashi made a gun with her fingers, and the next moment, Autumn's body got covered in explosions.

"Aha. I didn't just explain my ability to show off or make fun of others, you know? It's just that I won't be able to see your shocked look if I don't explain it."

The nanomachines that used the energy of the IS turned the mist into a heat source and blew up the target. This ability is called [Clear Passion].

Although, it might not be highly effective in limited space, this skill can be prepared while doing all other actions, so it's highly rated for being effective in practical battle.

"Gu...It's not over...no...not yet!"

"Nope, it's over—right, Ichika-kun?"

Feeling a bad premonition, Autumn turned her head around to see Ichika grabbing his right arm and concentrate.

"Come on out, [Byakushiki].

His entire body was covered in light, and then—

(Tatenashi-san just told me to make a wish, which means that I can still summon [Byakushiki] at this moment.)

I never heard of such a nice thing before.

But I believed it.

([Byakushiki] will respond to me as long as I call for it, no matter how many times—no matter how many times!)

"Come out, [Byakushiki]!"

I gathered my concentration on my right arm, and through my tightly shut eyes I somehow saw the light in front.

Then...I let the core form, no, summon on my right hand.

"[Byakushiki], emergency summon! [Yukihira Niigata] , maximum output!"

The core formed particles of light that covered me.

After feeling the hardness of the core that changed into my weapon, I opened my eyes.

(--I can do it!)

I synchronize the already materialized [Byakushiki] with my wavelength and attack Autumn.

Raising the blade above my head, I could strongly feel the activation of [Reiraku Byakuya].

"What? How-How did you—"

"Who knows? TAKE THIS!"

"Guu!!"

Autumn raised the 8 armored legs above her head to block my attack.

But I didn't stop as I sliced down forcefully.

"Wha..."

From between the armor bits that were sliced off by [Reiraku Byakuya], I could see Autumn moving in a somewhat slow manner...no, that's not it. It's not that she was too slow, but I was too fast.

"Guu!"

I used the thrusters that had the function of [Ignition Boost] to fly at Autumn and kicked her to the wall. Perhaps the force was too strong as this impact caused part of the wall to collapse, and I could see what was behind it.

"! Ichika-kun, get her!"

"Ye-Yes!"

"Da-Damn it...is that it...!?"

Swoosh! The sound of compressed air could be heard , and Autumn got away from her IS.

"What!?"

"Ichika-kun!!"

Autumn's IS glowed, and several seconds later, it self-destructed.

...Just when I was about to be caught in it, Tatenashi-san covered me with her body.

"Are you alright? Ichika-kun?"

Extending her water veil shields to the largest, she protected us. Even though I had the IS' [Absolute Defense], I would have been impossible to remain unscathed had I been caught in that explosion.

"Y-Yeeah, wait...ah! Where's that woman!?"

"She got away. She most likely took the core out before it self-destructed, leaving behind only the armaments and armor to self-destruct. Even so, that was reckless of her. She would have hurt herself had she failed."

Saying this in an unexpectedly stern tone, Tatenashi-san felt rather cool.

"Is-Is that so? Well...speaking of which, I guess..."

"Mn?"

"I-I would be really happy if you could move back a bit..."

Tatenashi-san hugged me to cover me with her back.

In other words, well...her breasts were stuck on my face. Soft and elastic.

"Ya. Ichika-kun no ecchi[5D 2]."

"No, no, that's not it! Well, that-that's because things were urgent..."

"Ahh—you're not man enough if you try to look for an excuse. How are onee-san's breasts?"

"..."

"Not talking? You're too much."

"Huh, no, well...it-it's really soft...I guess..."

"Ichika-kun."

"Ye-Yes."

"You're really perverted."

Having given up on arguing back, I weakly lowered my head.

Anyway, a lot of things happened today.

Right now, all I want to do is to take a bath.

"Oh yeah. What do you think this is?"

Saying this, Tatenashi-san played around with 'That Thing', swirling it around.

"...? The crown?"

"Yup, that's right. The one who gets this can stay in the same room as Ichika-kun. It's really a great item."

"What!?...Don-Don't tell me those girls were working so hard for that?"

"Yup."

"...What were you thinking...anyway, wouldn't living with me be quite an uninteresting thing?"

"Is that so? Well, anyway, I got it."

I have a bad feeling, but well, it's too late.

"I hope we can get along during this time, Ichika-kun♪
"

Powerless, I fell backwards onto the floor.

(Damn it! Damn it! Damn it!)

Autumn ran through the IS Academy grounds, cursing in her mind.

(What simple job! What kind of joke was that-that kid!)

Speaking of which, the attack for today's infiltration was meant to be carried out in the dorm room, but as there was suddenly a roommate, they had to modify the plan drastically.

(Speaking of which, I never liked that kid ever since she joined this organization...)

She remembered the girl who always looked so haughty, thinking that nobody could match her, and that everyone was inferior to her.

The girl herself took part in the creation of the [Remover] and the planning of the infiltration this time.

(Speaking of which, what sort of remover was that? Wouldn't it be meaningless if it can be summoned from such a far distance anyway?)

And there was no second chance now. Once it was used, the IS would become resistant to it.

(...That's right!)

Autumn then realized that because the IS had created a resistance to being removed, it was able to be summoned from afar.

In other words, it was totally predictable, and the girl who raised this plan should have seen the outcome. That's what Autumn thought.

(I'll kill...kill kill kill! SHE MADE A MOCKERY OUT OF ME!)

Gritting her teeth in anger and regret, she found that she finally reached a park that was far away from IS Academy.

(Damn it...I'm thirsty. Is there water...)

She looked around, and found a water cooler at the park.

Anyway, got to deal with this thirst! Autumn quickly walked to it.

(I'll kill that brat! I don't care what Squall says.)

With a tap-turning motion, the water spurted up.

She went over to ravage the water like a beast and continued to think of how she should kill that girl who just joined in.

(Slowly, slowly kill her...hihi.)

Autumn suddenly noticed that there was no water.

(What's wrong? Is it faulty...?)

Thinking that, she looked at the tap, but something unbelievable happened.

The water spurt up wildly, covering the sky.

"What!?"

The water that rained down on Autumn like transparent blocks wet her clothes, but she didn't care about that.

(Is this...[AIC]!?)

Though she immediately tried to back away, her feet that were about to move were stuck because of [AIC].

Due to the inertia exerted, Autumn fell backwards.

"Damn it! Is that the German IS!?"

"That's correct, [Phantom Task]."

Laura's voice echoed silently.

The icy pressure surrounded her, maintained over there.

"Don't move. A sniper is aiming at your forehead."

"Ku...!"

"Spill it out. Everything you know about your organization."

As a soldier, Laura already had received information about this secret organization.

Through the infiltration and the fact that they used ISes to battle, she understood that it was a really large group.

"Your IS was a second generation one from the US. How did you get it? Talk."

"Who would!"

The IS core technology was never revealed to the outside world.

In other words, it could only be taken from somewhere .

And because it would be a heavy loss on the national defense side, nobody would reveal that their ISes got stolen.

From the way they planned the theft of the IS and the capability to do it, this organization wasn't to be underestimated.

"Alright. I have lots of ways to carry out interrogations , so it looks like I need to spend some time with you."

As Laura said that and walked to Autumn, Cecilia said through the private communicator,

"Get away! A unit's approaching!"

"Wha...?"

Immediately after expanding the sensors, Laura's right shoulder got shot through.

"Guu!"

Laura immediately took off the left eyepatch to activate the [Odin's eye], the hyper sensor device.

But it was tough as she had to dodge the next two shots.

"Laura, get away!"

Using the trajectory of the shots, Cecilia was immediately able to tell where the opponent was shooting from, and aimed at the machine that was quickly approaching.

"How did that happen...don't tell me...?"

Appearing in the focus lens that was used to see things far away was a machine Cecilia had seen once before.

BT number 2 frame [Silent Zephyrs].

It was a prototype frame that used data from the first frame, Cecilia's [Blue Tears], and had BIT protective shields.

"What are you doing? Cecilia, shoot!"

"Kuu...!"

Cecilia immediately used her laser rifle to snipe, but as the enemy deployed the BIT shields, there wasn't any effective damage.

She then released her BITs, but they were shot down by the enemy.

(Sniping down so accurately at supersonic speeds? And even the shooting was fast!)

Cecilia was mystified that the opponent's ability was better than hers, and the threat caused by the normal BITs of the enemy was far greater than when Cecilia controlled 6 of them at one go, sending her into a tough spot.

"If that's the case!"

Cecilia shot the missile BITs below, intending to let the enemy that was flying to defend before attacking, forcing it into a tight corner.

Though Cecilia believed this, something unbelievable happened next.

"Wha...!?"

The curved lines that were drawn out in light took down the missile BITs.

(This is...a polarized control shot that can only be done when the BT weapon is moving at high velocity? How can there be such—)

The unbelievable scene that happened in front of Cecilia caused her to remain rooted there.

(Amongst all the IS pilots, my suitability with BT should be the highest. So, why!?)

"What are you doing? Move aside!"

"Wha—!?"

Laura knocked Cecilia away, taking the BIT laser attacks for Cecilia.

After seeing the [Schwarzer Regen] armor dissipate, Cecilia finally recovered, but by then the attacker was already beside Autumn.

"I'm here to get you, Autumn."

"Don't...you call me like that!"

The attacker that flew over shot a Gatling Laser in a small area at Laura, preventing her from approaching Autumn.

At the same time, the attack used a pink laser blade to slice the [AIC] apart, freeing Autumn.

"Is that all German enhanced genes have to offer?"

That face was covered by a hyper sensor that acted as a cap, and only the lips could be seen.

But Laura could clearly see a smirk on her face.

"Damn it...how do you know that?"

"I have no need to tell you, good bye."

The attacker grabbed Autumn and flew back the way she flew in from.

The BITs that were holding off Laura and Cecilia immediately self-destructed after the mission.

"Laura, call the school! I'll pursue them!"

"Stop it! It's useless to chase them. And with our abilities, even if we caught up to them, we would lose to them."

"..."

Cecilia bit her lips in anger and watched the enemy fly off.

The mysterious attacker had come in like the wind, and gone off like the wind, not leaving any evidence behind.

Laura and Cecilia felt that a storm was about to arrive.

"And that's the deal."

"Haa..."

At night, in my room.

After the festival ended, I heard Tatenashi-san's explanation.

Recently, a mysterious group had started to take action , and they were targeting me. As precaution, she requested to stay with me.

"Th...Then, what kind of person is Tatenashi-san?"

"Ara, I'm a gentle onee-san."

"Enough with that."

"Okay. The Sarashikis have been dealing with a lot of underground work. Do you know of the secret forces?"

Secret forces—the kind that would work behind the scenes and never appear in public?

"The Sarashikis are a secret force that goes against other secret forces...it's rather prominent."

Tatenashi-san laughed as she opened her fan.

The words written on it were 'Often on the Battlefield'.. .really, I don't know how to deal with her.

"But since the immediate danger's over, I can relax slightly now."

"You want to change rooms now? I'll be—"

A saving grace to me. I swallowed these words that I nearly said out. If I said them, I don't know what kind of reaction I would get.

"Lonely here."

"Fufufu. I'll stay here for the time being? Because I got the crown anyway."

Gua, there's still that trick.

"After changing rooms, you can look for me if you feel lonely sleeping alone."

"No, no need, no need to worry about that."

I feel that if I don't say things clearly, they will just get worse.

She's someone who would strike at such opportunity.

"Che—I thought that you would be happy."

"Yes yes. I'm turning off the lights."

"Mn, sleep well then."

I turned off the lights and snuck into my bed.

Extremely tired, I quickly sank into dreamland.

"Good night, Ichika-kun. You'll be really busy in the future."

At the last moment, I heard Tatenashi-san say that.

"Everyone, it's been tough during the school anniversary a few days ago. Now, I'm going to announce the results of the votes."

That's also the announcement of the result of the tussle over me.

I seem to hear every student that's gathered in the sports hall swallow their saliva.

"In first place, the audience-interactive play 'Cinderella ' that the Student Council organized!"

""""...Huh?""""

Everyone immediately opened their mouths in shock. Several seconds later, the girls recovered and started booing,

"DESPICABLE! CUNNING! CHEAT!"

"WHY IS IT THE STUDENT COUNCIL!? ISN'T THAT TOO STRANGE!?"

"WE WORKED SO HARD!"

Facing the audience's complaints, Tatenashi-san made an 'Okay Okay' hand gesture and continued,

"The condition to take part in that play was to 'Vote for the Student Council', but we didn't force anyone to vote, so we did follow everyone's will."

The-There's still that condition...

I'm actually rather mystified as compared to being stunned. That's really a well-thought out plan.

But Tatenashi-san's explanation couldn't stop the complaints.

"Okay, calm down. As a Student Council member, Orimura Ichika-kun shall be sent to take part in each social club when it's suitable. As a guy, he can't take part

in matches, so please let him be the manager or do the layman stuff. If you want him, please write a request to the Student Council."

...What?

"We-Well, if that's the case..."

"Re-Really can't be helped, you. I'll accept it then."

"Our club had no chance of winning anyway. That was lucky."

Voices could be heard from all over.

And then, each club started getting into a frenzy over me.

"OUR SOCCER CLUB FIRST!"

"WHAT ARE YOU SAYING!? IT'S OBVIOUSLY LACROSSE FIRST!"

"THE COOKING CLUB WANTS TO RAISE A REQUEST!"

"HERE! THE TEA CLUB'S HERE!"

"It's okay for the kendo club to be second?"

"THE JUDO CLUB! WE HAVE GROUND FIGHTING TECHNIQUES TO LEARN!"

--No, wait wait! What about me? My own will!

"Then, if there are no special issues, Orimura Ichika-kun shall belong to the Student Council. Please follow my instructions in the future."

After Tatenashi-san ended it like that, the students started clapping and whistling loudly.

Huh? What? What's the situation now? I belong to the Student Council? I'll be sent to take part in activites of other clubs?

"Speaking of which, I have to follow Tatenashi-san's orders!?"

I have a bad feeling, a really bad feeling.

"Good night, Ichika-kun. You'll be really busy in the future."

I recalled what Tatenashi-san said last night.

(Was she talking about this?)

I don't know how serious she was.

I just know that it's useless to go against her.

"Congratulations on becoming the Vice President of the Student Council, Orimura Ichika-kun!"

"Congrats~"

"Congratulations. I look forward to be working with you."

Tatenashi-san, Nohohon-san and Utsuho-san said respectively, the pops could be heard from the party poppers.

We're in the Student Council Office. Facing the luxurious table that had its back to the window, it left a deep impression, a sign of the person in authority. Yup.

"...Why did it end up like this..."

"Ara, isn't this a great way to settle this? Ichika-kun had to join a club anyway. The Principal said to use the Student Council's power to force you to join a club."

"Even if Orimu joins a club, only a small handful would have given up~"

"But the situation would have definitely ended up where the other students would come over and say to you 'Please join our club', so the Student Council came up with this plan."

The three of them followed up each others' sentences really nicely. Really, as expected of childhood friends, I guess.

Realizing that resistance was futile, I weakly lowered my shoulders.

"My own will's being completely ignored..."

"Oh my, what are you saying? There are three beauties here. Aren't you satisfied?"

"Yeah~ Orimura—there are beauties with you."

"I don't know about beauties or anything, but working here should give you some experience."

Anyway, amongst the trio, Utsuho-san seemed to be the sane one.

It can't be helped then. I can only ask Utsuho-san about the work in the future.

"Well...anyway, this means I have to come here everyday after school?"

"That'll be the case for now. Once we send you to a club, you'll take part in club activities there."

"I-I got it."

"Anyway...if you don't mind, I've got a question for you."

"What?"

It's rare that Utsuho-san's voice would be so hard to hear.

I looked at her in a mystified manner. Wanting to say something out and stopping twice, she finally spoke up,

"What's the name of that friend of yours who came to visit during the school anniversary?"

"Huh? Ah, Are you talking about Dan? He's Gotanda Dan, and he's studying in a high school in the city."

"Is-Is that so...so, he's the same age as you, Orimura-kun?"

"Yeah, that's right."

"...Younger than me by two years..."

"Huh?"

"Nothing, it's nothing. Thank you."

After saying that, Utsuho-san thanked me politely. Her face seemed to blush subconsciously. Was I mistaken?

"Then! To commemorate the gathering of the Student Council members and to celebrate Ichika-kun becoming the Vice-President, I baked a cake today, so everyone, let's eat."

"Wa~I agree~"

"I'll brew tea then."

"Mn, please do. Honne-chan, please bring the tea set over."

"Ok—ay."

It seems like working together is a basic thing to them, as the trio started to get ready in the same manner.

What I'm happy with is that the cake that's lined together looks really good.

"Then...cheers!"

"Chee—rs!"

"Cheers!"

"Ha-Haha...cheers. Haa..."

Just like that, I was forced to join the Student Council.

"Sorry to disturb you."

Tatenashi opened the heavy door and walked into the Principal's office.

It was dark outside the windows, and the night that gathered caused everything to be covered in darkness.

"Ahh, Tatenashi-kun, perfect timing."

Inviting Tatenashi in was an elderly man with a calm face.

On the surface, his wife was the principal, but in fact, all school affairs were controlled by this man.

"I need your report."

The man put his hand on the stylish table and prompted Tatenashi to speak.

His face had wrinkles that matched his head and the white hair.

He was rather friendly, and was often called the ' Conscience in the School'.

The man who often does the running of the school, Kutsuwagi Juuzou (轡) is the real man running IS Academy.

"First, about Ichika-kun. His training's going really well."

Tatenashi kept her usual playful manner and started reporting in a stern manner.

"To be honest, I'm really surprised. Things that I trained him in once, he's able to learn them after practicing them for a few times. His comprehensive ability is far greater than any girl I've met before."

"You're right. That's because he's Orimura-sensei's brother."

There seemed to be some hidden meaning behind that, but Tatenashi didn't ask as she continued her report,

"Next, about [Phantom Task]. We confirmed that there are at least two IS. One of the cores was taken out, so they shouldn't be able to take much action."

If the core's the heart, the armor's the body.

If only the heart was taken out, it meant that it had to lose the body that was fit around it, so it'd take quite some time to assemble the armor around it.

It couldn't run like a battery that could be put back in after taking it out.

"It's been tough on you, Tatenashi-kun."

"This is nothing much. My machine can gain practical experience too."

"Mn, the Russian type. It's finally complete. I was worried whether it would be completed in time. It's the right thing to hand it over to you."

"There are several flaws the developers made in the design, but I want to use it as it is now."

"Okay, I'll leave it to you then. Do whatever you want."

After reporting about two, three more things, Tatenashi ended her report.

"Anyway, that's all."

"I know all about it. Tatenashi-kun's still really popular ."

"Ufufu, that's because I'm the Student Council President."

Tatenashi smiled as she said that, and Juuzou showed a warm and friendly smile as well.

The conversation between both of them removed the tense atmosphere like mist.

"Then, let's have some tea. Oh yea, I bought some nice snacks. It'll be great if it fits your tastes."

After Juuzou said that, Tatenashi's eyes glittered. The expression at that moment fit her age.

"Will Juusou-san's snacks be to my liking? I'm looking forward to it♪"

"Hahaha, I'm not that amazing."

"No no no, it's really good. Oh yes! I brought some tea along with me."

"Ohh, is that brewed by Nohotoke-kun?"

"As you guessed."

"Ohh! The tea she brews is really good. I think we can have a good tea party."

Right now, his speech and mannerism were completely different from his age. He didn't look like a man who was going to be 70.

The two people who were seated started a tea party like good friends.

Nobody would think that they were the two leaders of IS Academy if they saw them like this.

Epilogue: Beginning of the Story

"YOU BASTARD! WHAT WERE YOU DOING!?"

In a room of a high rise condominium filled with luxurious furniture, Autumn closed in on the girl.

"..."

"SAY SOMETHING! YOU DAMN KID!"

Autumn pushed the girl into the wall. Even so, her anger didn't subside, and she then pulled out a knife and pressed it against the girl's face.

"I'm going to scar that face of yours...!"

"Stop it, Autumn. You're too noisy."

A girl with a beautiful face walked out from the bathroom, and the light blond hair radiated under the light.

"Squall...!"

"You'll get old if you always get angry. Calm down, Autumn."

The woman called Squall was dressed in a bathrobe as she sat down on the sofa.

Autumn glared at Squall with regret.

"You...knew that this would happen?"

"Yup."

"If that's the case, why didn't you tell me! I...I'm-I'm your—"

"I know, Autumn, I know. You're my important lover."

"Good-Good that you know..."

Autumn's anger up till now got wiped off by the smile on Squall's face, and she blushed as she looked down.

She looked like a girl who just met her first love. Seeing her cute look, Squall again smiled happily.

"Come over, Autumn. I'll wash your hair for you. You're really tired today, right?"

"Ah, ahh..."

The girl looked uninterested as she stared at their interaction.

(Boring...how boring...)

The girl who refused to work with others or interact emotionally with them left the room with an icy cold gaze.

"**M**, please my IS. The [Silent Zephyrs] was just stolen, and it's necessary to readjust it."

"I got it."

After the girl called **M** answered, she closed the door. Alone in the corridor, she held onto the necklace on her chest and closed her eyes.

(Just a little more...Just a little more...)

I've been waiting for this, waiting for this moment to arrive.

(Then, my revenge will begin...that's right, finally—)

We'll finally meet.

(...Orimura Chifuyu...)

With no one knowing it, the girl's lips curled evilly.

Afterwords

Hello everyone, this is Yumizuru. Is everyone still healthy? My body's not too good...I often ended up in bed.

I often feel that I'm so weak. Seems like I got to train myself or else I won't be able to take it anymore. (?)

Then, how does everyone feel about this volume?

The strongest onee-san Sarashiki Tatenashi appeared. It's great to be a Student Council President, an ideal once.

Does everyone like to see an onee-san that's capable and yet playful—? (Calling for response)

Personally, I liked it. it'll be great if Tatenashi herself is well-received.

Also, the mysterious organization debuted in this volume. It'll be very important in the developments after this.

Most notably, a character with important significance will be introduced. To be honest, I'm really looking forward to it.

(Actually, I didn't plan to write this character into the fifth volume, but I wrote it in out of excitement.)

How should I write the sixth volume? It's a rare thing for me, but I haven't decided. Well, I decided on the outline, it's just whether I should write it as a side story or develop the events in this volume. Un, which one will be better?

Ahh, what do I do? If anyone has any requests, please send in the questionnaires!

I keep writing it over and over again, but Okiura-sensei's drawing's really brilliant!

The design for Tatenashi and her IS [Mysterious Lady] were excellent!

Most notably, the [Mysterious Lady] was a lot more outstanding than what I thought. I can only say amazing.

And then, the IS manga that was serialized in the Monthly Comic Alive from June 2010. It was something that I was looking forward to.

I find that it's an outstanding piece of work. If possible, dear readers, please take a look.

Also, I'll be in charge of writing a manga script. The work's to be drawn by Yamaki Rin-sensei, who drew the manga version of 'Kanokon'. It'll begin serializing in Monthly Comic Alive in August 2010.

I'll do my best here, so I'll be in your care, readers. Right now, I'm thinking hard about the script.

The protagonist of a Light Novel editor will be having fun in a romantic slapstick comedy, please look forward to it!

And! And finally! IS will be getting animated! That's thanks to the support of all the readers.

Recently, I got really busy with the people working in this anime. Though I'm in charge of supervision, I would

revise the script fully. Please look forward to it! I'm looking forward to see the final product.

And so, we'll be having casting auditions. Auditions! Amazing! I never took part in one before! I'm really looking forward to it.

As for the production of the anime, I'm concerned with the 'Mochi ha Mochiya', and the 'current motivation is really important'. Mochi's really good!

...I was just kidding. The motivation's really important. I'm an amateur in anime, so I'll only lower the morale of the animators if I say too much. The mood's really important. After I told them the basic outline, I gave them authority to do whatever they want.

I can't really reveal too much, but the animating company in charge of producing this is a group that goes 'if you don't say «I hope for this to happen, but it may never happen», there will be unexpected developments'. I really love their anime. Yes.

There'll be a certain famous person in charge of the character design. He's the person I worked with when I was at the gaming company. I really feel fortunate.

As for editing, that really famous 'person' will be in charge. Amazing—It's like I'm dreaming.

There's all sorts of interesting things, and the way they decided on the anime script was brilliant! Everyone met at the onsen and decided on a lot of things there.

Perhaps the readers may find it shocking, but that was really a great meeting. My personal wish to 'Go to an onsen with work personnel' is complete. That feels really great.

Then, dear readers, I'll see you in the sixth volume. Bye!

--Yumizuru Izuru.

On a certain day in May 2010.

メカメイド

会長はメイド様…

白の社さま
ゴメンナサイ

帯をご覧になった方は
お分りいただけたろうか？
アニメじゃない、本当の事さ
アニメ化が決定しました
弓弦先生おめでとうございます。

まだ詳細は明かせないと
思いますが
挿絵を描かせて頂いてる
身としましては
キャラデザ…すごくいいよ
とだけ言っておきます。

コミカライズも開始して
ISという作品が広がりを
見せる中、自分も貧弱ながら
奮闘していきたいと思います。

赤星先生の
鈴が可愛いくて
死ねる

めんどくさいデザイン
ばかりで本当に
申し分けないです；

Congratulations on it being animated.

Dear readers.

You knew about it already, right?

It's not anime (アTN: That's a Gundam ZZ opening. The first one).

It's confirmed to be animated!

Congratulations, Yumizuru-sensei!

I don't know the specifics.

But as the illustrator in charge, I just want to say,

The character design's really brilliant.

After seeing the IS manga,

I felt that I didn't draw well enough.

I still need to work hard and improve myself.

Translation Notes and References

Chapter 1

1. ↑ See: Schnitzel for more details. TP: I know that it's supposed to be pork, but the RAW explicitly stated it to be beef...
2. ↑ See: Baumkuchen for more details.
3. ↑ See: Frankfurter Kranz for more details.
4. ↑ See: Berliner Pfannkuchen for more details.
5. ↑ See: Yatsuhashi for more details.
6. ↑ Basically what is being said here is that [Yukihira Nigata] alone uses a lot of shield energy, but with the [Reiraku Byakuya Shield] or the energy claw the drain on the shield energy would get worse.
7. ↑ See: Carbonara for more details.
8. ↑ **S**tudent **H**ome **R**oom
9. ↑ の. A rough translation for it will be 'whatever/ anyhow'.
10. ↑ Both of them are written as Noho-hon, の.
11. ↑ Mubyoushi, I think similar to what was used in History Strongest Disciple Kenichi.
12. ↑ Uchihyoushi, 打
13. ↑ Touchihyoshi, 当
14. ↑ Tsuranuki 貫
15. ↑ See: Capoeira for more details

Chapter 2

1. ↑ The dream of all guys. It involves a girl wearing nothing but an apron, hence the name.
2. ↑ **Kawaii** means cute in Japanese. But since the word has become popular with non-Japanese as well so it has been left as it is.
3. ↑ Inari Sushi, 稲
4. ↑ See: Manjuu for more details.
5. ↑ Hito tarashi 人
6. ↑ Tora-san is the protagonist of a movie called Otoko wa, tsurai yo. It's Tough being a man'
7. ↑ Bushi is a Japanese term used to refer to a warrior (not necessarily a samurai).
8. ↑ Kompeito is a Japanese candy.

Chapter 3

1. ↑ Cheongsam is a one-piece chinese dress for women.
2. ↑ Ojou-sama is the Japanese term for high-class ladies. The English equivalent would be "Milady".
3. ↑ 羅
4. ↑ Rakugoka, 落

5. ↑ Ichika's basically saying that he's an endangered species in IS Academy much like the Axolotl.
6. ↑ Ja—n, ke—n, pon! じ!
7. ↑ Secret = Himitsu 秘 and Minced Meat or Ground Meat = Hikiniku . As you can see the two Japanese words (Himitsu and Hikiniku) sound somewhat similar, hence the pun.
8. ↑ See Braising for more details.
9. ↑ Tatami is a type of mat traditionally used as a flooring material in Japan.
10. ↑ See Itadakimasu for more details.
11. ↑ Wafuku are the traditional ethnic garments of Japan.
12. ↑ Hanafuda are Japanese playing cards as well as the name of a game played using them.
13. ↑ Ameshi-hikari 雨, in the game, it's 7 points, Achieved by having 3 20-point cards and the Winder Ono no Michikaze card. It literally means that Ichika has the four other main girls shining down on him
14. ↑ In Hanafuda, it's 3 or 5 points.
15. ↑ This means that Houki was really nervous, since you'll be really stiff if you try to walk like that. Of course, our blockhead protagonist doesn't realize this...

16. ↑ Guy here is Aida Mitsuo, 相, poet and calligrapher who died in 1991
17. ↑ 迫, if I were to translate it fully, it would be ' mortar', but that wouldn't be appropriate. Maybe it can be described that Tatenashi dropped a bombshell?
18. ↑ Dust-covered princesses
19. ↑ Ouji means "Prince".

Chapter 4

1. ↑ See Windbreaker for more details.
2. ↑ Rough translation: "Ichika you pervert" or " Ichika's a pervert". But usually said in a playful manner.